

PIEGAN INDIANS.

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LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR

IN ANSWER TO

*A resolution of the House, of March 3, 1870, in relation to the late expedition against the Piegan Indians, in the Territory of Montana.*

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MAY 11, 1870.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

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WAR DEPARTMENT, April 20, 1870.

The Secretary of War has the honor to submit to the House of Representatives, in further compliance with the resolution of March 3, 1870, and with reference to his partial report of March 14, 1870, all the information in his possession relative to the late expedition against the Piegan Indians, in the Territory of Montana.

WM. W. BELKNAP,  
*Secretary of War.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C., August 17, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a letter, dated the 16th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and accompanying copy of a communication to him from General Alfred Sully, superintendent of Indian affairs for the Territory of Montana, in relation to Indian affairs in said Territory, and respectfully request that the recommendations of the Commissioner may receive the favorable consideration of the Secretary of War.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. T. OTTO,  
*Acting Secretary.*

HON. SECRETARY OF WAR.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., August 16, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith copy of communication just received from General A. Sully, superintendent of Indian affairs for

Montana, which I respectfully request be submitted for the consideration and action of the War Department. I may add that, upon information received from other sources, I regard the apprehensions entertained by General Sully as well founded. A considerable number of the Sioux are still roaming and hostile, coming in only occasionally to the settlements of the located Indians on the Missouri, and almost always boasting of their continued hostility, besides committing acts of lawlessness which, because we cannot punish, we must endure. These Indians roam far into Montana, and will lose no opportunity to commit acts of hostility upon the remote and exposed settlements. There is also serious danger to be looked for from the local Indians of Montana.

The Crows have a treaty, which embodies a stipulation for feeding them specific quantities of food for a certain length of time. Congress, however, neglected to make any appropriation to carry this stipulation into effect, and the Indians are consequently disappointed and dissatisfied. They regard it as a breach of faith, and a just cause for a general war. The same may be said of the Piegiens, Bloods, and Blackfeet, with some of whom the citizens have already come in conflict, even in the streets of Benton. I regard it, therefore, of great importance that every precautionary measure should be taken to guard against an outbreak; and I heartily indorse General Sully's views and recommendations, and trust that favorable action may be taken by the War Department on his letter.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,  
*Commissioner*

Hon. WILLIAM T. OTTO,  
*Acting Secretary of the Interior.*

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HELENA, MONTANA TERRITORY,  
August 3, 1869.

SIR: I feel it my duty to report to you that I fear before long we may have serious difficulties between Indians and whites in this Territory, and I would urge upon you the necessity of applying for an immediate increase of military force in Montana to prevent this. There is no section of the country that has more Indians in it than Montana, taking into consideration those who permanently reside here and those who visit the Territory peaceably or with hostile intentions. I think, taking them all together, I can safely say that about from fifty thousand to sixty thousand men, women, and children is the total of Indians frequently located here; and yet there is, if I am not mistaken, no section of the Indian country that has fewer troops stationed in it. At present there are not over four hundred men in the Territory, inclusive of the four companies of the Second cavalry, which have recently arrived, and as I understand, are to leave and rejoin the Department of the Plateau before winter. Should they do so, that would leave about two hundred men. These troops are distributed as follows: One company of infantry at Camp Cooke, which is situated on the Missouri River, seventy-five miles below Fort Benton; three companies of infantry at Fort Shaw, located on same river, sixty-five miles southwest of Benton; and three companies of infantry at Fort Ellis, near Bozeman City, one hundred miles southeast of Helena. All three companies are very weak, averaging from twenty-five to thirty men each. The cavalry battalion, under Colonel Brackett, is also stationed at Fort Ellis.

My reasons for apprehending trouble are, that war parties of Indians from the Powder River country, the British possessions, and from Idaho and Washington Territories, frequently visit this Territory and often commit depredations on the whites. The whites retaliate by killing *any* Indians they may chance to meet, sometimes in the most brutal and cowardly manner.

I cannot now give you a detailed account of these hostile meetings, which occur frequently.

There is a white element in this country which, from its rowdy and lawless character, cannot be excelled in any section, and the traffic in whisky with Indians in this Territory is carried on to an alarming extent. This frequently causes altercations between whites and Indians, resulting often in bloodshed; and as they occur in sections of the Territory where the civil authorities acknowledge themselves to be powerless to act, nothing but military force can at present put a stop to it.

The law-abiding citizens of Montana are anxious for peace and quiet with Indians, and would willingly give any assistance in their power to aid the authorities to carry out the laws, if they were backed by force.

From reliable reports, that increase daily, it is a wonder to me that open war with the Indians has not broken out already; but as yet only several skirmishes between Indians and soldiers and citizens have occurred.

General De Trobriand, commanding this district, has offered me every assistance in his power to enforce the laws; but, as you see, his force is very small to do much.

I intend to do all I can to arrest some of the citizens who, about ten days ago, committed the cowardly murder of a harmless old man, and a boy about fourteen years old, at Fort Benton. They were Piegans, (a part of the Blackfeet nation.) These Indians were shot in broad daylight, in the streets of the town. I think I can arrest the murderers, but doubt very much if I can convict them in any court.

Nothing can be done to insure peace and order till there is a military force here strong enough to clear out the roughs and whisky-sellers in the country; but I will do all I can, with the limited means in my power, to prevent a war or any serious difficulties between the whites and Indians.

With much respect, your obedient servant,

ALF. SULLY,  
*United States Army, Supt. Indians.*

HON. COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C., August 19, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a letter of this date from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and accompanying copy of a telegram received from General Alfred Sully, superintendent of Indian affairs for Montana, in relation to outrages committed by the Blackfeet Indians, to which the attention of the War Department respectfully invited, as recommended by the Commissioner.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. T. OTTO,  
*Acting Secretary.*

HON. SECRETARY OF WAR.

## PIEGAN INDIANS.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
Washington, D. C., August 19, 1869.

SIR: Referring to my letter to you of 16th instant, inclosing copy of one from General A. Sully, superintendent of Indian affairs for Montana, relative to anticipated trouble with the whites in that Territory, I have now the honor to inclose a copy of a telegram just received from General Sully, relative to outrages by the Blackfeet, with the recommendation that the same be laid before the Secretary of War for such action as he may deem necessary in the premises.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. J. D. Cox,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

HELENA, MONTANA,  
August 18, 1869.

*To Commissioner Indian Affairs:*

I fear we will have to consider the Blackfeet in a state of war. In addition to the late attack by these Indians on a train near Fort Benton, a large number of horses have been stolen within fifty miles of here, and early this morning a ranch, twenty-five miles from here was attacked and two men shot. The miners are very much exasperated.

ALF. SULLY,  
*Superintendent Indian Affairs.*

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, August 18, 1869.

SIR: In the absence of the Secretary of War I have the honor to inform you that your communication of the 17th instant, with a letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, showing a necessity for immediate increase of the military force in Montana Territory, has been referred to the General of the Army.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ED. SCHRIVER,  
*Inspector General.*

Hon. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
Washington, D. C., October 12, 1869.

SIR: I have the honor to forward herewith for your information a copy of a letter dated the 7th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and the accompanying papers, setting forth the necessity of prompt action by the military to check the depredations committed by Indians in Montana, and respectfully to request that further re-enforcements of the military force in that Territory be made, if possible, for the purpose stated.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. D. COX,  
*Secretary.*

Hon. SECRETARY OF WAR.

[Indorsement.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, *October 12, 1869.*

Respectfully referred to Lieutenant General P. H. Sheridan, commanding military division of the Missouri, for such action as the case calls for.

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*General, Secretary of War.*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, D. C., October 7, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of communications received from General Sully, superintendent of Indian affairs for Montana Territory, giving information of extensive depredations by Indians of that Territory of the Blackfeet and Piegan tribes.

This bureau is powerless to control and prevent these depredations, and I respectfully suggest the communications above referred to be transmitted to the Secretary of War, with the request that the military take prompt measures to check them.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. J. D. Cox,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

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BLACKFOOT AGENCY, MONTANA TERRITORY,  
*August 31, 1861.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the following in regard to the feeling and condition of the Indians of this agency. The depredations committed upon the whites so far have been done by the Piegans. The Bloods and Blackfeet have had nothing to do with it whatever, and the Bloods in particular are very anxious to come to this agency and comply in all respects to the conditions of the treaty made with them last year, provided they can be fed and taken care of, according to the promises made them. In fact by what I can learn, there is so far only a small band of the Piegans that are or that have been interested in the depredations lately committed, and their moving north with their families has been caused by fear of being accused of having something to do with these depredations, and the false reports of irresponsible, mischief-making whites. They are very anxious that the agency be kept up according to the treaty, and appear to be well pleased by what they have heard of the superintendent of Indian affairs and his intentions toward them.

I have employed twelve men at the rate of fifty dollars per month. I could not get them less, and have employed one four-mule team to haul wood and to do such other work as has to be done about the agency.

I can get everything here that is required, with the exception of flour, of Mr. Hubbell, agent, and have written Mr. Hubbell about that and expect he will attend to that soon.

Any instructions you may wish to send me please direct to Fort Shaw, as that is the nearest point from here.

Your obedient servant,

F. D. PEASE,

*Acting Agent for Blackfeet Indians.*

General ALFRED SULLY,

*Superintendent of Indians, Helena City, Montana.*

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BLACKFOOT AGENCY,

*September 2, 1869.*

DEAR SIR: Having met with Major Pease, your special agent for the Blackfoot Indians, and from whom I learned your arrival in the country, connected with Indian matters, I thought it would not be amiss for me to drop you a few lines on that subject.

I have recently arrived from the interior, where I have been since last winter with the Bloods and Blackfoot Indians. These people are perfectly friendly to the whites, and, up to the time I left there, they evinced no disposition to be otherwise. They were no little surprised to hear of the frequent raids made upon the whites by the Piegons. These people have always professed to be the friend and protector of the whites—living, as they have, in almost constant communication with Benton. I have not seen those Indians to know for what reasons they are now committing these depredations upon the whites, but really my knowledge of their character for a great many years will not permit me to think that there exists a general hostile feeling among them; on the contrary, these depredations have been committed by a portion of the young rabble, over whom the chiefs have no control, and nothing but the strong arm of the government can control.

The non-ratification of treaties made with these Indians has had anything else but a tendency to keep them quiet. Bound by no treaty stipulations, they think they have a perfect right to help themselves to any horses falling in their way.

I think, however, by keeping up this agency with a small amount of provisions, and to be given by the agent as their wants may require, will go a long way toward keeping them quiet, as the fast-decreasing herds of buffalo, their only dependence for food, will reduce them wholly dependent on the government for support.

The Bloods and Blackfeet, who are distant and live remote from each other, have no sympathy with the Piegons, and, of course, will take no part with them in any way. I expect in a short time these two tribes will visit this place, when a little straightforward talk will convince them that the government is determined on making them keep the peace.

As I intend spending the winter here, I may have the pleasure of meeting you here in person, when I can give you, in regard to these Indians, all the reliable information you may want.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALEX. CULBERTSON.

General A. SULLY.



SUPERINTENDENCY INDIANS OF MONTANA,  
*Helena, Montana, September 27, 1869.*

SIR: I have to report two more depredations committed by the Indians, and supposed to be Blackfeet. This occurred four days ago at a place not over seven miles from this city.

A citizen by the name of James Quait, well known to all the people here, lost some horses and mules. He started out to look for them, and, not returning, search was made for him, and his body found pierced with arrows and horribly mutilated.

Nine Indians were seen a few days before driving off the stock from that direction. The Indians have now been at this work for over two months, and as no one, neither the military nor citizens, have made any attempt to check them, they are daily becoming more bold in their operations.

I am told by those who have lost stock that they ride up boldly in daytime in the presence of citizens and take what animals they please. Of course, they all come to me with their complaints, thinking it is my duty to punish the Indians and recover their stolen property.

There are already over four hundred horses and mules known to have been stolen lately. That number, at \$150 each, will make an expensive claim against the government.

With much respect, your obedient servant,

ALFRED SULLY,

*U. S. Army, Superintendent Indian Affairs.*

Hon. E. S. PARKER,

*Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, Illinois, October 21, 1869.*

GENERAL: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the Secretary of the Interior, with accompanying reports of General Sully, Mr. Pease, and Mr. Culbertson, Indian agents in Montana, on the subject of depredations by the Piegan tribe of Indians.

We have had so few troops in Montana, on account of the expiration of enlistments, as to have been unable to do much against these Indian marauders; but the regiments are now filling up, and I think it would be the best plan to let me find out exactly where these Indians are going to spend the winter, and about the time of a good heavy snow I will send out a party and try and strike them.

About the 15th of January they will be very helpless, and if where they live is not too far from Shaw or Ellis we might be able to give them a good hard blow, which will make peace a desirable object.

To simply keep the troops on the defensive will not stop the murders. We must occasionally strike where it hurts; and if the general in-chief thinks well of this, I will try and steal a small force on this tribe from Fort Shaw or Ellis during the winter.

It numbers about fifteen hundred men, women, and children, all told.

Very respectfully,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

Brevet Major General E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant General U. S. A., Washington, D. C.*

## PIEGAN INDIANS.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
 ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
 Washington, November 4, 1869.

SIR: Referring to your communication of the 21st ultimo, relative to depredations by the Piegan Indians in Montana, I have the honor to inform you that your proposed action, as stated therein, for the punishment of these marauders has been approved by the General of the Army.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant General.*

Lieutenant General P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Com'dg Military Division of the Missouri, Chicago, Ill.*

[By telegraph from Chicago, Illinois, January 29, 1870.]

To General W. T. SHERMAN, *Commanding Army:*

In compliance with your permission of November 4, 1869, to punish the Piegan Indians, who have been robbing and murdering in Montana, I have the honor to report the complete success of an expedition sent against them, under the command of Colonel E. M. Baker, Second Cavalry, in which one hundred and seventy-three Indians were killed, forty-four lodges destroyed, also a large amount of winter provisions, and three hundred horses captured, &c. I think this will end Indian troubles in Montana, and will do away with the necessity of sending additional troops there in the spring as contemplated.

I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY,  
 HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
 Chicago, January 29, 1870.

General W. T. SHERMAN, *Washington:*

I have the honor to transmit the following dispatch, forwarded by General Hancock from General De Trobriand, as further information on the subject of my dispatch this morning: "The expedition a complete success. Colonel Baker just returned, having killed one hundred and seventy-three Piegans, destroying forty-four lodges, with all their winter supplies, robes, &c., and captured over three hundred horses. The Bloods turned over all the horses taken from white people which were in their possession. The most of the murders and marauders of last summer are killed. Pal and Mountain Chief escaped with a few followers, leaving everything but horses they were on. Our loss—one man killed, and man accidentally wounded by falling off his horse. Report by mail without delay."

This dispatch is transmitted verbatim.

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*



WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY,  
*Chicago, Illinois, January 31, 1870.*

General W. T. SHERMAN:

Colonel Baker had to turn loose over one hundred squaws. Had no transportation to get them in.

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

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[Telegram.]

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, February 26, 1870.*

Lieutenant General SHERIDAN,  
*Com'dg Military Division of the Missouri, Chicago, Ill.:*

Have you collected all the reports in regard to Colonel Baker's fight with Piegan Indians? If so, please forward at once. Acknowledge receipt.

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant General.*

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[By telegraph from Chicago, Illinois, February 26, 1870.]

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH, WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, February 26, 1870.*

To General SHERMAN:

GENERAL: Colonel Baker's report of Indian fight in Montana not yet received here. Is expected early; full report can be sent when that is received. General Sheridan will be back to-morrow.

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

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HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, Illinois, February 28, 1870.*

GENERAL: I have your telegram of the 26th instant, and will make the necessary reports and furnish you with all the facts in the case as soon as Colonel Baker's report is received. Colonel Baker could not make out his report at Fort Shaw, as he was obliged to return immediately to Fort Ellis to get shelter for his horses and men. I see that Mr. Vincent Collyer is out again in a sensational letter. Why did he not mention that Colonel Baker had captured over one hundred women and children? This he suppressed in order to do injustice to that officer by deceiving the kind-hearted public, and to further the end of the old Indian ring, doubtless in whose interest he is writing.

So far as the wild Indians are concerned, the problem which the good people of the country must decide upon is, who shall be killed, the whites or the Indians; they can take their choice.

Since 1862, at least eight hundred men, women, and children have been murdered within the limits of my present command, in most fiendish manner, the men usually scalped and mutilated, their —— cut off and

placed in their mouths; women ravished sometimes fifty and sixty times in succession, then killed and scalped, sticks stuck up their persons before and after death. I have myself conversed with one woman who, while some months gone in pregnancy, was ravished over thirty times successively by different Indians, becoming insensible two or three times during this fearful ordeal; and each time on recovering consciousness, mutely appealing for mercy, if not for herself, for her unborn child. Also another woman ravished with more fearful brutality, over forty times, and the last Indian sticking the point of his saber up the person of the woman. I could give the names of these women were it not for delicacy.

It would appear that Mr. Vincent Collyer wants this work to go on. I mention these two cases especially, because they came under my own personal examination, and can give them as an example of what has occurred to hundreds of others.

The old Indian ring has again set itself to work to get possession of Indian affairs, so that the treasury can be more successfully plundered, and are printing and circulating throughout the country specimens of doggerel poetry, such as I inclose to you with this communication. These specimens have been sent to me recently, and you can from them better judge of their object.

I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. H. SHERIDAN,

*Lieutenant General.*

General W. T. SHERMAN,

*Commanding U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.*

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[Telegram.]

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,

*Washington, March 5, 1870.*

General P. H. SHERIDAN,

*Commanding Military Division Missouri, Chicago :*

Letters of February 28, and dispatch of March 4, are received. Your instructions to protect the Mandans are perfectly right, and should be adhered to. The commanding officer at Fort Rice cannot protect the Mandans, but he might prevent a war party going up. The troops at Stevenson should afford them protection, and if hostile Sioux are killed they deserve it.

The substance of your letter about the Piegan has been read by the Secretary of War to the Cabinet, and will be given to the press. Let us have Baker's full report as soon as possible. Meantime don't be unhappy about Indian affairs. There are two classes of people, one demanding the utter extinction of the Indians, and the other full of love for their conversion to civilization and Christianity. Unfortunately the army stands between and gets the cuffs from both sides.

W. T. SHERMAN,

*General.*

SUPERINTENDENCY OF MONTANA,  
*Helena, Montana Territory, February 1, 1870.*

GENERAL: I have received the following telegraph from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: "Stop all trading with the Blackfeet. Grant no licenses to trade with them. Will write you by mail."

I do not understand the object of this, but I send you this copy for your information. I have seen the reports of Colonel Baker's attack on the Indians, where it states that one hundred and seventy-three were killed. How many of these killed were men? It has been reported to me that there were only twenty or thirty, the rest women and children. These reports come from citizens, half-breeds, and Indians. I have made no report of the affair to the Interior Department, waiting for some more definite information.

With much respect, your obedient servant,

ALF. SULLEY, U. S. A.,  
*Superintendent Indians.*

Bvt. Brig. Gen. P. R. DE TROBRIAND,  
*Commanding District of Montana, Fort Shaw.*

A true copy:

J. T. MCGINNISS,  
*Acting Assistant Adjutant General.*

Official copy:

M. V. SHERIDAN,  
*Acting Assistant Adjutant General,  
 Military Division of the Missouri.*

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, M. T., February 3, 1870.*

GENERAL: Your letter of the 1st instant, by which you communicate to me the telegram of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, is duly received. The business of trade with Indians not being of my jurisdiction, I can only thank you for the information.

As to what you say in regard to the operations of Colonel Baker against the Piegons, I should be sorry to think that you could put any faith in the idle rumors and false reports spread by some whisky smugglers from Benton, whose poisonous drug was found in plenty in the Indian camps, and by other croakers to whom the peace of the Territory and the security of its residents are of little or no weight, compared with their private interests in trade. To give you an idea of the veracity of the reports mentioned by you as coming from "citizens, half-breeds and Indians," a few figures, will suffice.

The expeditionary column destroyed in all forty-four lodges with their whole contents. Out of this seven or eight formed a separate encampment by itself, where nobody was killed, as it had been abandoned in a hurry by the Indians. So the execution was made against thirty-six lodges, and there one hundred and seventy-three were killed, and about *one hundred squaws and papooses were captured, and, after the action, turned loose unhurt.* Some few men succeeded in escaping. This makes in the camp an aggregate of at least two hundred and eighty, which gives an average of more than seven, nearly eight to a lodge—almost double the ordinary number, which is four to five to a lodge. This proves to you mathematically that the extreme severity of the

weather during the week previous had brought back all the hunters to the camp, and that all the warriors of the band were there. So much for the report made to you.

While on the subject allow me to give you my honest opinions in reference to these matters. There is in the Territory a certain number of people whose pecuniary interest is intimately connected with the Indian trade, licit or illicit. Therefore they are averse to any Indian policy which can hurt their purse. Hence the opposition to the expedition against the Piegans, and their malignity in misrepresenting the way in which it was conducted. These people seem to have conceived an idea that they could find in you a "*point d'appui*," and are apparently using every effort to influence your judgment in favor of their opinions, by constant correspondence and reports which you mentioned to me on three different occasions. They do even more in attributing to you expressions of opinion in accordance with their ideas and their interests. To specify: It is currently reported that you stated as a *fact* the very thing that you mention in your letter as the report of half-breeds and Indians; and, to be more explicit, you are alleged to have said that we had killed only old women and children; that the warriors were all away hunting, and that when they heard from their camp they sent word to Colonel Baker that they were coming to fight him if he would wait for them, and that Colonel Baker, hearing the news, hastened away back to Fort Shaw.

This I would not mention if it were not to show you what reports of all sorts are in circulation, and how unwise it would be to give them any credence, unless ascertained by positive information.

I hope, general, you will excuse me for having entered into these details, but I thought you would prefer to be informed of what otherwise you could ignore, and what, in my judgment, it is better you should know in reference to the reports alluded to in your letter, and the forms they assume in passing from mouth to mouth.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel Thirteenth Inf. Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A. Comd'g.*

Brevet Major General ALFRED SULLY, U. S. A.,

*Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Helena, M. T.*

A true copy:

J. T. MCGINNISS,

*Acting Assistant Adjutant General.*

Official copy:

M. V. SHERIDAN,

*Acting Assistant Adjutant General Mil. Div. of the Missouri.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,

*Chicago, March 7, 1870.*

Official copy respectfully forwarded to the Adjutant General of the army for the information of the General-in-Chief.

P. H. SHERIDAN,

*Lieutenant General Commanding.*

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,

*Washington, March 9, 1870.*

Respectfully referred to the Secretary of War for his information.

W. T. SHERMAN,

*General.*

[Telegram.]

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
Chicago, Illinois, March 9, 1870.

General WILLIAM T. SHERMAN,

*Commanding Army of the United States, Washington, D. C. :*

I forward by to-day's mail the reports of Colonel Baker, and General James A. Hardie.

I respectfully invite special attention to these reports.

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General United States Army, Commanding.*

Official copy respectfully furnished by mail.

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General United States Army,*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
Chicago, Illinois, March 8, 1870.

GENERAL : I have the honor to forward the report of Brevet Colonel E. M. Baker, Second Cavalry, giving an account of his fight with Piegan Indians, on the Marias River, January 23, 1870. I also forward the report of General James A. Hardie, my inspector general, who was sent especially to Montana, so that I might be fully satisfied of the guilt of the Indians, whom you authorized me to punish in your instructions of November 4, 1869.

I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

General W. T. SHERMAN,

*Commanding Army United States, Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
Fort Shaw, February 18, 1870.

SIR : I have the honor to forward herein inclosed the report of Brevet Colonel Baker, Second Cavalry, on the expedition against the hostile Piegans under his command.

To this report I have but little to add, as the major general commanding the department has already been informed by me of all the dispositions made to prepare and organize the expedition at these headquarters, and to secure its success, as far as possible, with the means at my command.

It is most gratifying that my previsions were fully realized, and complete success was attained, not only in the severe punishment of the Piegans, but in the telling effect of that manifestation of our power on the whole of the Blackfeet nation, Bloods and Blackfeet proper, who henceforth will carefully avoid bringing upon themselves a similar retribution by murders of white men and depredations on the settlements. This has given the chiefs friendly disposed the power of controlling their wild young warriors much better, and inspired those ill-disposed

with a salutary fear, which will coerce them into good behavior in the future. The peace and security of the Territory may therefore be considered as restored, at least for a pretty long time, and may be forever, if judicious measures are taken to prevent occasions of new troubles, as well from lawless white men as from wild Indians.

This most desirable result has been accomplished chiefly by the activity, energy, and judgment with which Brevet Colonel Baker has conducted the operations, conforming himself in every respect to his instructions, and making the most of what was left to his discretion. I would therefore recommend that experienced and able officer to the approving commendation of superior headquarters, for a promotion by brevet as a just acknowledgment of his excellent conduct in this circumstance.

The presence of small-pox among the Piegons and Bloods, which induced Colonel Baker to turn loose the women and children captured in the hostile camp, was also the cause of his ordering everything there to be destroyed. I may add that the expeditionary column had not surplus rations enough to feed that crowd on their way back to Fort Shaw, and that it would have been extremely inconvenient in several ways to keep them at this post, as there was no provision for them at the Indian agency on the Teton River.

The number of horses captured, which was originally over three hundred, was reduced to two hundred and eighty-five, when the herd arrived at this post. The balance were either lost on the way, having gone astray in the bushes, or, perhaps, stolen during the night. Eighteen were taken by Colonel Baker as pack animals with his command. Thirty-four horses and one mule were claimed since that time and returned to known resident citizens, who proved property. Two died, which leaves two hundred and thirty horses in my keeping. They are nearly all Indian ponies, in a poor condition, and of but little value. I would respectfully request to be instructed what ultimate disposition is to be made of them.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel 13th Infantry,*

*Brevet Brigadier General U. S. A., Commanding.*

Brevet Brigadier General O. D. GREEN, U. S. A.,

*Assistant Adjutant General Department of Dakota,*

*St. Paul, Minnesota.*

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HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, December 24, 1869.*

[Special Orders No. 62.]

I. The commanding officer, Fort Ellis, Montana Territory, will detail one non-commissioned officer and ten privates from the infantry of his command, to proceed *immediately* to the camp near Diamond City, Montana Territory, to take charge of the public property at that point, until the arrival of Company G, Thirteenth Infantry. The detachment will be supplied with at least fifteen days' rations.

II. Brevet Colonel E. M. Baker, major Second Cavalry, with the entire effective strength of the four companies of his regiment stationed at Fort Ellis, Montana Territory, will proceed to Fort Shaw, Montana



Territory, *with the least possible delay*, and report in person to the district commander for further instructions.

III. Colonel Baker will detail one of the medical officers stationed at Fort Ellis, to accompany his command.

IV. The ambulance belonging to the medical department at Fort Ellis will also accompany the battalion.

V. Colonel Baker will have his command (men and horses) rationed for such a length of time as he deems necessary, and supplied with such a quantity of ammunition as he in his judgment deems sufficient. He will also direct his medical officer to be provided with a good and sufficient supply of medical and surgical stores, for use in the field.

VI. The Quartermaster's Department will supply the requisite transportation.

By order of Brevet Brigadier General R. De Trobriand :

J. T. MCGINNESS,

*First Lieut. 13th Infantry, Brevet Major U. S. A.,*

*Acting Assistant Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF DAKOTA,

*St. Paul, Minnesota.*

#### HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,

*Fort Shaw, January 16, 1870.*

COLONEL : In compliance with instructions from superior headquarters, you will proceed with your command, without any more delay than may be required by the present condition of the weather, to chastise that portion of the Indian tribe of Piegiens which, under Mountain Chief or his sons, committed the greater part of the murders and depredations of last summer and last month, in this district.

The band of Mountain Chief is now encamped on the Marias River, about seventy-five miles from this post, at a place called the Big Bend, and can be easily singled out from other bands of Piegiens, two of which should be left unmolested, as they have uniformly remained friendly, viz., the bands of Heavy Runner and Big Lake. Those two chiefs and Little Wolf are the three who met General Sully at the agency, a short time ago.

All the Piegiens now on the territory of the United States are encamped along the Marias River, from the trading-post near the Red Coulie down to near the mouth of the river, and this section of the country up to the frontier line of the British possessions will be the field of your operations.

Above the trading-post and at a short distance is encamped about one-half of the Bloods. This tribe is peacefully inclined, and although a number of stolen horses are reported to be in their camp, they should be left alone, and not included in your expedition for the present. The Blackfeet, proper, being far away in the British Possessions and not considered as hostile, will not come in your way.

All necessary information in regard to the location of the several Indian encampments, and the character of the roaming Indians who may fall in your hands during your operations, will be furnished to you by the guide who is ordered to report to you.

When you strike the Marias River, or at such a time when it may not any more convey a premature information, you will leave or send a

small detachment of ten, under a non-commissioned officer, to the trading post of the Northwest Fur Company, for the protection of the establishment during your operations.

Beside your command of four companies of cavalry, Captain and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Higbee is ordered to report to you with the mounted detachment at Fort Shaw, and the necessary transportation.

Captain Torry, Thirteenth Infantry, is also ordered to report to you with his company, as a guard and escort for the train of supplies that you will have to leave behind, so as to leave the whole of your cavalry disposable for action. A guide will also be furnished you to go with the train. Beyond these general instructions it is deemed unnecessary to add anything. The details as to the best way to surprise the enemy and to carry on successfully the operations is confidently left to your judgment and discretion, according to circumstances, and to your experience in such expeditions.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel 13th Infantry,*

*Brevet Brigadier General U. S. A., Commanding.*

Brevet Colonel E. M. BAKER,

*Major Second Cavalry, Fort Shaw, Montana Territory.*

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,

*Fort Shaw, January 16, 1870.*

A true copy.

Respectfully forwarded for the information of the major general commanding the department.

R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel 13th Infantry,*

*Brevet Brigadier General U. S. A., Commanding.*

FORT SHAW, MONTANA TERRITORY,

*February 18, 1870.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of a scout made by me against the hostile Piegans and Blood Indians.

Pursuant to Special Orders No. 62, headquarters district of Montana, I left Fort Ellis on the 6th of January, with two squadrons of the Second Cavalry, consisting of H Company, Captain Edward Ball; L Company, Brevet Major Lewis Thompson; G Company, Captain S. H. Norton, and F Company, under the command of Lieutenant G. C. Doanes, and arrived at Fort Shaw on the 14th.

On our arrival at Fort Shaw, Brevet Lieutenant Colonel G. H. Higbee was ordered to report to me with a detachment of fifty-five mounted infantry, and Captain R. A. Torry, with his company of the Thirteenth Infantry.

I left Fort Shaw on the 19th and marched to the Teton River, where we remained in camp until the evening of the 20th, when we left camp and made a night march to the mouth of Muddy Creek, a branch of the Teton. I remained in camp here until the evening of the 21st, then inarched for the Marias River, expecting to be able to reach the Big Bend on the next morning, having understood from the guide that was where the Indians were encamped.

We were obliged to camp in a ravine, on the Dry Fork of the Marias, till the night of the 22d, when we broke camp and marched to the Marias River, arriving there on the morning of the 23d. We succeeded, about 8 o'clock, in surprising the camp of Bear Chief and Big Horn. We killed one hundred and seventy-three Indians, captured over one hundred women and children, and over three hundred horses. I ordered Lieutenant Doane to remain in this camp and destroy all the property, while I marched down the river after the camp of Mountain Chief, who I understood was camped four miles below. After marching sixteen miles, I found a camp of seven lodges that had been abandoned in great haste, leaving everything. The Indians had scattered in every direction, so that it was impossible to pursue them. The lodges were burned the next morning, and the command started for the Northwest Fur Company's station, arriving there on the 25th. I sent for the chiefs of the Bloods, and had a consultation with them, making them give up all their stolen stock. They promised that they would be responsible for the good behavior of their tribe. On the 25th, started for Fort Shaw, where we arrived on the 29th of January.

The cavalry command left for Fort Ellis on the 31st, arriving there on the 6th of February, having made a march of about six hundred miles in one month, and this in the coldest weather that has been known in Montana for years.

Too much credit cannot be given to the officers and men of the command for their conduct during the whole expedition.

The result of the expedition is one hundred and seventy-three Indians killed, over one hundred prisoners, women and children, (these were allowed to go free, as it was ascertained that some of them had the small-pox,) forty-four lodges with all their supplies and stores destroyed, and three hundred horses captured. Our casualties were one man killed, and one man with a broken leg from a fall of his horse.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. M. BAKER,

*Major Second Cavalry, Brevet Colonel United States Army.*

Brevet Major J. T. MCGINNISS,

*Assistant Acting Adjutant General, District of Montana.*

#### HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,

*Washington, D. C., March 12, 1870.*

In submitting to the Secretary of War the within report of Colonel Baker and of Inspector General Hardie, I will remark that they are this moment received, and will bear careful perusal on account of the unusual severity with which the matter has been treated both by Congress and the press.

General Sheridan took the precaution to send General Hardie, a most humane and considerate officer, well known here in Washington, to Montana to judge, on the spot, between the conflicting statements of parties there, and he justified the expedition against Mountain Chief's band of the Piegan tribe.

Colonel Baker followed the instructions of his immediate commander, Colonel De Trobriand, but he does not report in detail, as is proper and usual, the sex and kind of Indians actually left dead at the camp on the Marias.

I will instruct General Sheridan to call on Colonel Baker for a fuller

report on this point, to meet the public charge that of the number killed the greater part were squaws and children.

W. T. SHERMAN,  
General.

[Special Orders No. 2.]

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
Fort Shaw, January 14, 1870.

The commanding officer of the mounted detachment pertaining to Fort Shaw, Montana Territory, will report *immediately*, with the entire effective strength of his command, to Brevet Colonel E. M. Baker, United States Army, commanding battalion Second Cavalry.

By order of Brevet Brigadier General P. R. De Trobriand.

J. T. MCGINNISS,  
First Lieut. Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Maj. U. S. A., A. A. A. General.

[Special Orders No. 4.]

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
Fort Shaw, January 16, 1870.

I. The commanding officer Fort Shaw, Montana Territory, will detail ten privates from each of the companies F, I, and K, Thirteenth Infantry, to report at once to Captaint R. A. Torrey, Thirteenth Infantry.

II. Captain R. A. Torrey, Thirteenth Infantry, with all the available men for duty of his company, A, together with the men ordered to report to him in the foregoing paragraph, will report immediately to Brevet Colonel E. M. Baker, United States Army, commanding battalion Second Cavalry.

By order of Brevet Brigadier General P. R. De Trobriand.

J. T. MCGINNISS,  
First Lieut. Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Maj. U. S. A., A. A. A. General.

[Special Orders No. 6.]

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
Fort Shaw, February 8, 1870.

Captain N. S. Constable, assistant quartermaster, post quartermaster Fort Shaw, Montana Territory, will pay J. Cobell for twelve days' service as guide to the late expedition against the Piegan Indians, at a rate not to exceed five dollars per day.

By order of Brevet Brigadier General P. R. De Trobriand.

J. T. MCGINNISS,  
First Lieut. Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Maj. U. S. A., A. A. A. General.

[Special Orders No. 12.]

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
Fort Shaw, March 22, 1870.

I. Pursuant to telegraphic instructions from headquarters Department of Dakota, dated St. Paul, Minnesota, March 21, 1870, the horses captured by Brevet Colonel E. M. Baker in his late expedition against the Piegan Indians will be turned over by the commanding officer Fort

Shaw, Montana Territory, to the quartermaster's department at that post.

II. The post quartermaster at Fort Shaw, Montana Territory, will make arrangements for the sale at public auction of the horses ordered to be turned over to him by the foregoing paragraph of this order, after due public notice has been given of at least thirty days.

The notice of sale will be duly advertised in the official newspaper at Helena, Montana Territory.

By order of Brevet Brigadier General P. R. De Trobriand.

J. T. MCGINNISS,

*First Lieut. Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Maj. U. S. A., A. A. A. General.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION MISSOURI,  
INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Chicago, Illinois, January 29, 1870.*

GENERAL: In obedience to instructions of the Lieutenant General commanding the division of the 27th ultimo, (see papers A herewith,) directing me to proceed to Montana Territory, to make an examination of the subject presented in the correspondence accompanying the Lieutenant General's letter relating to the condition of Indian affairs in that region, I left this city on the 27th December, reached the confines of Montana on the 4th instant, and arrived at Helena on the 5th, and at Fort Shaw on the 7th instant.

The text of my instructions sets forth briefly the substance of the correspondence referred to, and the service intrusted to me. It is as follows:

It will be seen by the accompanying papers, that General De Trobriand and General Sully differ very much in their judgment in reference to the condition of Indian affairs in the district of Montana. From these papers it appears that General Sully so represented affairs in Montana as to cause the Secretary of the Interior to apply to the General-in-Chief for additional protection for the people, and on this application as a basis, the General authorized me to punish the Piegan Indians, and orders were sent accordingly to General De Trobriand. On the date of November 22, General De Trobriand makes a report on the condition of Indian affairs, from which it will be seen that the reports of Indian depredations are exaggerated; and also a second report of the date of November 26, from which it appears that the condition of Indian affairs is by no means alarming.

After a careful examination of the correspondence, I desire that you proceed without delay to Montana, and make a thorough examination of the subject, and if there is any danger of Indians being molested who are friendly, you are authorized to suspend all operations under the orders emanating from the General-in-Chief, until your report is received, or until you return to these headquarters.

The following is an abstract of the correspondence accompanying the foregoing:

No. 1. Letter of October 12, 1869, from the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of War; copy of letter dated 7th October, from Commissioner of Indian Affairs; report of General Sully of murder of citizens by Indians and thefts of stock, and setting forth the necessity for prompt action by the military to check Indian depredations, and asking for re-enforcements of troops in Montana. Referred to General Sheridan from the Adjutant General's Office for the necessary action, October 16, 1869; referred to commanding general department Dakota, November 15, 1869.

No. 2. Letter of October 21, 1869, from Lieutenant General Sheridan to General E. D. Townsend, Adjutant General of the Army. Lieutenant General S. acknowledges receipt of letter from Secretary of the Interior,

with accompanying reports of General Sully, Lieutenant Pease, and Mr. Culbertson; states that he has few troops in Montana, on account of the expiration of enlistments; thinks it would be best to find out where Indians are going to spend the winter, &c., and then to strike them a blow.

No. 3. Letter of November 4, 1869, from General E. D. Townsend to General Sheridan. Refers to communication of the 21st ultimo; states that his proposition as stated therein for the punishment of Indian marauders is approved by the General of the Army.

No. 4. Letter of November 15, 1869, from General Sheridan to General Hancock. Incloses correspondence described, and authorizes General Hancock to extend the authority given to punish Indians to any of the Blackfeet who have been engaged in murders, robberies, &c.; suggests that Major Baker is a suitable person to be intrusted with any party to be sent out.

No. 5. Letter of November 10, 1869, from Major R. Chandler, acting assistant adjutant general department Dakota, to General De Trobriand. Major General Hancock directs that he endeavor to ascertain where the offending Blackfeet are wintering, &c.

No. 6. Letter of November 23, 1869, from General O. D. Greene, assistant adjutant general, to General De Trobriand. Transmits correspondence with the General-in-Chief, Lieutenant General, and department commander in reference to matters in Montana; states that he (General De T.) had better send for Major Baker and have a consultation with him relative to matters of preparation for the expedition against the Piegons.

No. 7. Letter of September 9, 1869, from General De Trobriand to General O. D. Greene, assistant adjutant general. Reports relative to the Indian troubles in Montana; states that the Blackfeet, Bloods, Pen d'Oreilles, and part of the Piegons are quiet and ready to go on reservations, but that young men had committed thefts; that exaggerated reports have been made by interested parties relative to Indians to induce the governor to issue a proclamation to raise volunteers, and that the military force in the district is inadequate to the exigencies of the service should hostilities assume a serious character, &c.

No. 8. Letter of October 1, 1869, from A. J. Simmons to General De Trobriand. States that the citizens of Helena held a meeting to devise a plan by which to prevent further depredation by Indians, and that the citizens have been driven to this measure by the late murder of peaceful and inoffensive citizens in the vicinity of Diamond and Silver Cities, added to the already too long catalogue of crime, and the continued stealing of stock in nearly all counties of the Territory, and expresses their belief that unless suppressed it will culminate in a general massacre of our outlying settlements and ruin of so much of our fair Territory.

No. 9. Letter of November 22, 1869, from General De Trobriand to General O. D. Greene. Reports upon the circumstances connected with a murder committed at or near Silver City; states that the murder was committed by white men, &c.

No. 10. Letter of November 26, 1869, from General De Trobriand to General O. D. Greene. Furnishes information concerning the Blackfeet, Piegons, and Blood Indians, in compliance with instructions in letter of November 10, from General Hancock, and states:

I do not see so far an opportunity for striking a successful blow. The only Indians within reach are decidedly friendly, and nothing could be worse, I think, than to chastise them for offenses of which they are not guilty. I speak not only with a view to justice and humanity, but for the best interests of the Territory. Those who are known or suspected to be hostile are scattered along or beyond the frontier line. The arrival



of several hundred recruits in detachments is known to them, and they are all on the alert. At the first move they would disappear in the British Territory. But let everything remain quiet during three or four months, and in the spring they will come back, supposing that we will let by-gones be by-gones. Then, I think, will be the best chance to give them a lesson of good effect toward putting an end to the murders and depredations among the settlements. This, of course, with all reserve for any good occasion which may present itself in the meantime to catch any offending party venturing within reach at a proper distance inside the line.

Upon reaching Montana, I found, after proper observation, that the wide-spread alarm excited during the past summer by the depredations of the Blackfeet, and notably by the murder of two citizens (Messrs. Clarke and Quail) had yielded to a calmer and more accurate view of the situation. The correspondence between a committee of the citizens of Helena and General De Trobriand shows that the gravest apprehensions were entertained; that the continued perpetration of outrages by the Indians would, if not suppressed, "culminate in a general massacre of our (their) outlying settlements." Efforts had been made to induce the governor to call out volunteers, and the report of the superintendent of Indian affairs shows a gloomy view of the situation, as he viewed it. The reports of General De Trobriand show that at that time he did not share in the general alarm, which he deemed to be without sufficient foundation, and, in fact, to have been excited through the efforts of parties desiring to have volunteers called out from the Territory; that he believed the bulk of the Blackfeet were peaceably disposed, though he was aware of murders and depredations committed by young men, principally among the Piegiens; that these, and these only, should be punished, though the present, for various reasons, was not a propitious time (November 26) to attempt it.

In times of Indian disturbances, the alarm caused by Indian raids, whether for the purpose of massacre or for plunder, naturally leads to the circulation of inaccurate and frequently wild reports, and in a period of excitement, the public danger is apt to be magnified by parties whose interests lie in the promotion of military schemes that will cause the disbursement of money or will furnish employment for the otherwise idle. Especially might this be the case where the business affairs of a community are unprosperous, as have been the trade and mining interests of Montana for the last two years. I have no doubt that there had been, in the case in question, some alarm on the part of the citizens that was unnecessary and some that was simulated. But for all that, events have actually occurred (to be described further on) which, if they did not fully justify apprehensions of an immediate "general massacre of the outlying settlements," were nevertheless of such consequence as to produce much exasperation and genuine and well-grounded solicitude among the people of the Territory.

In Montana, as in most of our other Territories where there are Indians, there are two classes of people. One is that of the citizen interested in the settlement, growth, prosperity, and civilization of the country, many having families and permanent homes there; the other class is connected with the Indians in some way, either through trade or intermarriage, &c., or belonging to the Indian service. The former class is naturally timid as respects Indian disturbances. With their experience and their knowledge of the Indian character and disposition they dread their savage neighbor. They know they are the natural objects of their enmity; they have families, homes and fortune, all exposed to their inroads; they have been witnesses of their horrible butcheries, their brutalities to women, their mad ferocity in dealing with those falling into their power. The complete subjection of the Indians is ab-

solutely essential to their sense of security. The other class have generally not so much to fear from the Indians. They do not, as do the settlers, encroach on the Indians' lands. The traders are their friends. They are not likely to exhibit their worst side toward the Indian Department, or to acknowledge the entertaining of any other than peaceful intentions in the presence of its employés. Besides, the traders whose business would be broken up by military operations (if they be personally safe) would be loth to admit a condition of things calling for such operations. This class leans toward the Indians, and would be apt to resist belief of evil disposition on their part.

Then there are unprincipled and unscrupulous men of all classes who speak and act without reference to the truth and right, in pursuit of their private ends or the gratification of their passions.

The troops do not court Indian campaigns. They are in a position to estimate more nearly the real danger. They would be naturally inclined to turn a deaf ear to clamor and to be deliberate in their judgments.

From this diversity of position, of interests, and of feeling, naturally flow differences in opinion and different views of facts, always likely to be intensified by controversy. Hence the necessity on the border of discovering the sources and channels of reports in order to ascertain the real truth in any question pertaining to Indian matters.

It is not deemed necessary to make a particular application of the foregoing to the clearing up of the discrepancies exhibited in the correspondence. The sequel will show such a concurrence of testimony upon the essential points as to leave little room for doubt as to the real facts.

Additional aggressions, reported by General Sully (December 13 and 17) in a telegram to General Hancock of the 17th December, appear to have assisted to modify the views of General De Trobriand as to the gravity of the situation, and to have so impressed General Sully, that he suggested raising three hundred volunteers, believing the cavalry force in the Territory not sufficient for the contemplated blow, and, indeed, proposed to command an expedition against the Indians himself. These aggressions had deepened the solicitude of the community, but the knowledge that military preparations were on foot for an expedition into the Indian region gave expectation of relief and produced tranquillity.

Much of the trouble that has disturbed the frontier General Sully attributes to the prevalence of drunkenness among the Indians, and he earnestly pressed the use of the troops to break up the whisky trade. There are plenty of lawless and unprincipled men upon the border who supply Indians with whisky surreptitiously, if not openly, in defiance of the law. The Indian will barter anything for drink, even his horses. General Sully thought that the need to replace horses sold for liquor frequently incited the Indians to steal. There is, no doubt, truth in this; but the facilities for running stock across the line and for trading it advantageously with bands on that side, and perhaps at the Hudson Bay posts, are so great, (see affidavits appended, also reports of superintendent Indian affairs,) and the ease and impunity with which such raids could be made so well understood, that to minds excited and reckless from drunkenness, the temptation to plunder the settlements is irresistible. It seems impracticable to prevent this by the use of troops, unless something more is done than guarding passes or occupying positions where the line of frontier to be protected is so extensive.

The prevention of the sale of whisky to Indians has not hitherto seemed a possibility. The reservation of these Indians, which covers

their habitual haunts on this side of the line as far south as the Teton, has never been confirmed. There is no certainty as to its being Indian territory within the meaning of the law prohibiting sales of whisky to Indians, and convictions under any territorial laws cannot be reached. Direct operations of the military to suppress this traffic are undertaken at the risk of infringing upon the rights of persons. But the trade is conducted so secretly (the traders being in collusion with the Indians) that it would be difficult to stop it if the power to arrest traders and destroy their liquor were unquestioned. This trade interferes very much with the traffic of authorized traders, whose interest, of course, is to keep the monopoly of the Indian trade. Besides, the sale of whisky tends to make the Indians troublesome; this leads to the necessity for military movements, to the disturbance if not the destruction of trade.

The small-pox prevailed to considerable extent among the Indians, and is thought by some to have had the effect to intensify hostility of many of the Blackfeet against the whites, to whom they attribute the introduction among them of the disease. (See affidavit of John R. Wren, who swears that the Blackfeet declared "that if any cases of small-pox occur they will kill every white man they meet on the prairie.")

On the 6th of December, General Sully telegraphed to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that he proposed visiting the Blackfeet to demand the murderers and stolen property in their camps, and wished authority given to have such military assistance furnished him as he might require. The authority was given; and General De Trobriand was intrusted to provide the troops. (See report of that officer and accompanying documents.) From this paper it appears that General De Trobriand entertained no hopes of the success of General Sully's scheme.

General Sully proceeded to the Blackfeet agency on the Teton River, thirty-five miles from Fort Shaw, and there had a conference with some Indians of the Piegan and Blood tribes. I extract the following account of his visit from his report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, of January 3, 1870:

I left here (Fort Shaw, Montana Territory) on the 1st instant with twenty-five men, and reached the Teton the same afternoon; there I met a very few Blackfeet; among them were Heavy Runner, Little Wolf, and Big Lake, Piegan chiefs, and Gray Eyes, a Blood chief. I was disappointed at not meeting more of the principal men of the nation; but when my messenger reached the camp he found the Indians very much intoxicated, and some of the head-men so overcome with the effects of liquor that it was impossible for them to meet me. \* \* \* I had a talk with what Indians that were there the night of my arrival and the next morning at their agency. I told them that the government, tired out with repeated aggressions of their people, was determined to make war against them as the only way to protect the lives and property of the whites; that if we made war they need not think the northern boundary would stop our troops from pursuing them; that we intended to cross the line and pursue them in the British possessions. These Indians protested that they were not responsible for the conduct of the Blackfeet Indians; that they were innocent, and begged, if war must be made, that they might not be involved, (that is, the Bloods and South Piegans,) and finally they agreed to go to their camp, and, with their men, move north and bring back all the stock they could get; but they could not promise me to deliver up the principal men connected with late murders, for they could not take them. However, they agreed to kill them if they could and bring in their bodies. I have little faith in their carrying out this part of their promise. From what these Indians say and from what the whites and half-breeds tell me, I do not think the Bloods had anything to do with the late trouble. A portion of the Bloods, with their head chief, is still north of the line. Still, no doubt some of their young men have taken a hand in stealing stock. A portion of the Piegans, under Bull's Head, an old chief, are hostile, and are still north of the line. The camps of that portion of the Piegans who profess to be friendly, and also of the Bloods, are no doubt frequently visited by Indians known to be hostile, but these Indians do not tarry there long, nor have they in their camps any stolen stock; that is, so far as I can learn, the Blackfeet Indians living in the British possessions, and a part of the same nation who live north of the line, are the Indians

who have committed nearly all of the thefts that have been committed in the Territory for the past two years. The train of mules run off a few days ago is known to have been taken by them, and has been seen in possession of British Indians; also large numbers of animals lately stolen in the Territory have been seen by reliable citizens of Montana, sold by British Blackfeet Indians to citizens at or near Edmonton House, one of the Hudson Bay Company trading posts, on the Saskatchewan. The Indian chiefs all tell me the temptation for their young men to steal is so great that they cannot always control them, for they have a ready market for all they can drive across the frontier; and that fine American horses and large mules bring a good price. Another Hudson Bay post, west of Edmonton House, on the same stream, called the Mountain Post, is also a favorite horse market of the Indians. From all I can learn, the difficulties with the Indians are more a matter between the United States and English government than between the United States and Indians; and if the English government cannot protect their savages and half-breeds, they should at least allow our troops to cross the line into that unsettled portion of their territory, to deal with these robbers ourselves. Any war commenced against the Blackfeet will be a farce and a useless expenditure of money, without we can follow them up into their own country.

In talking to the Indians the other day, I took it upon myself to tell them we had permission from the English government to cross the line with our troops, and it had more effect upon them and the half-breeds, to bring them to terms, than anything I had said. The Blackfeet look upon the British line as a safeguard from any attack. I hope my mission to the Piegiens and Bloods may be a success, yet I am not over-sanguine; two or three weeks will determine. In the meantime I would recommend the commander of the district not to retard any preparation he may contemplate, so that he may be ready to strike if necessary, should it prove that these chiefs cannot carry out their good intentions with their own people. \* \* \* \* \*

A copy of this report was furnished General De Trobriand by General Sully. That officer did not retard his preparations for the contemplated blow.

On my reaching Fort Shaw, January 7, I found that General De Trobriand's views, as disclosed in his report, respecting the necessity for the chastisement of the Piegiens and the proper time for the blow, had apparently, as I have already stated, undergone modification. I therefore addressed him a note inquiring if such were the case; and if so, what were his present opinions; and in case these differed from those previously expressed, what were the grounds for the change. He replied that since November 26, the date of his last report, events had occurred which materially altered the condition of things. The Indians (Piegiens and Bloods) had returned from the north to the Marias River in December. They had not been expected to return before the end of January or February. Thus an opportunity was afforded for striking them, which had not been afforded before; then the following outrages had been perpetrated by the Piegiens:

1. An attack on a party of hunters at the head of Sun River Valley, forty-five miles from Fort Shaw, on the evening of December 13, in which one man was killed and another wounded.

2. The theft of thirty mules from the train of a government contractor, December 16.

3. The theft of provisions from a ranch near Camp Cooke on December 22, accompanied with wanton destruction of property, followed by an encounter with the ranchman, who, re-enforced by a small party of soldiers, pursued the thieves. The fight lasted several hours, when the soldiers withdrew. These events occurring simultaneously with the return of the Indians to the Marias, General De Trobriand thought exhibited a disposition on their part to continue their plundering and marauding incursions. In fact, some of the young men were said to talk openly of such designs. It became evident that these thieves were encouraged by their past impunity, and that an immediate and vigorous chastisement of them was called for. General De Trobriand stated, however, that he remained of the opinion still that the general disposi-

tion of the Blackfeet nation, including Blackfeet proper, Piegiens, and Bloods, is as he before reported; that is to say—

No state of war actually exists in the Territory, and the majority of the Indians, especially among the Bloods, are peacefully disposed. He adds, however, that among them all, and principally among the Piegiens, there is a certain number of ill-disposed and positively hostile young men who must be punished, as they cannot be controlled by the friendly chiefs and are even openly sustained and protected by other chiefs; the most conspicuous of whom are Mountain Chief, with his sons and their followers.

I transmit herewith also a copy of General De Trobriand's report of December 21, to headquarters department Dakota. From this is extracted the following:

Indian affairs in this Territory have assumed, quite recently, a new aspect, which is much more favorable to the execution of the plan of the Lieutenant General for a winter expedition against the Piegiens than could have been expected at this season of the year. Encouraged by the quiet attitude of the military and the absence of all apparent war dispositions against them, the Piegiens and Bloods have come back from the British possessions, and established their hunting camps along the Marias River, as announced in my telegram of the 18th instant from Fort Benton. There they are within easy reach, and I propose to seize the opportunity and strike as soon as we are ready, which will be about the time indicated by the Lieutenant General.

No better opportunity can present itself to punish the parties guilty of the murders and depredations committed last summer. The most of them, if not all, are with the band of Mountain Chief. This band is now within easy reach from here, if the secret of our intentions be kept, and I am very careful that nothing of it may be known or suspected. Thirty-five miles behind Benton is a band of Piegiens, at a place called Sweet Grass Hill. Further up is the camp of Mountain Chief, which I intend to strike first, by a surprise, killing or capturing those who may be found there; then sweeping other bands of Piegiens congregated at or near the trading post lately established by Mr. Riplinger, for the Northwest American Fur Company, and further, if necessary.

I think this will do, and if success attend the expedition, no further operation will be necessary to bring the Piegiens and others to such terms as the government will think proper to impose for the restoration of peace and the security of the Territory.

General Sully's conference with the Indians at the agency took place on the 1st instant. He had allowed them two weeks for compliance with their promises. I had not expected any efficacious result from this conference; it was a failure at the start. General Sully himself, indeed, was not sanguine of any success. General De Trobriand, as I have said, thought nothing would come of it. But this much was done: the Indians were distinctly informed that "the government was tired out with repeated aggressions of their people," and had "determined to make war against them, as the only way to protect the lives and property of the whites," and warned of what would follow, if they did not furnish the guarantee of future good conduct demanded of them. They agreed to effect the restitution of all the stolen stock they could get, and to try and have the murderers killed.

To verify accounts derived from various sources pertaining to the subjects of inquiry, and to get fresh information as to what progress was being made by the Indians to carry into effect their promises as to their present dispositions and the places of encampment of the obnoxious bands, I caused a messenger to be sent to the Marias. This messenger, who knew the Indians well, whom I had heard generally well spoken of, and who had the confidence of General De Trobriand, left Fort Shaw January 8, and reached the agency on the Teton, thirty-five miles from Fort Shaw, the same day, and the Northwest Fur Company trading post, seventy-five miles from Fort Shaw, the next day; went among the Piegiens that and the following day, and returned January 12. The trading post is on the Marias River, seventy-five miles from Benton, and about the same distance from Fort Shaw. It is situated above the Dry Fork,



and five miles below Medicine Creek. The messenger reported that the Bloods were near the trading post, and that the Piegiens were also trading there. He saw Mr. Riplinger, agent of the Northwest Fur Company, at the post, who is well acquainted with the Blackfeet tribes. Mr. Culbertson, whom General Sully advised me to see, had left for Belly River, north of the line; but his report is on file. From what the messenger saw and heard, it was clear that the Indians did not seem to be earnestly trying to effect anything toward the fulfillment of their promises. They had talked about doing something. But though there was stolen stock (some he saw and recognized) distributed through the different bands on the Marias and south of the line, both among the Bloods and Piegiens, there was no effort to get it and bring it in. Mr. Riplinger told him about the same thing. He found out that the Piegiens had some stock in their possession belonging to white men—some out with a buffalo party, some also with their bands on the Marias. He saw horses among the Bloods that had been stolen, and he heard from the traders that there were some stage horses there. Among the Indians he saw there were Little Wolf and Heavy Runner, whom General Sully had met at the agency. Little Wolf told him that he had sent two lads to Bow River to try and get back some mules stolen from the train of a government contractor; and that they were among the Piegiens and Blackfeet north of the line. The name of the Piegan who stole them and had them is White Man's Dog. This Indian had killed another Piegan, and had to leave camp and to go north. The contractor had got permission to send a man north, prepared to offer a reward for the recovery of the mules. The Indian boys went with him. This, properly, cannot be claimed as a mission undertaken in furtherance of the chief's promises to General Sully. Little Wolf said that General Sully demanded Pete, Star, and Crow Top, all concerned in murders. Pete is the only one there. He said he could not give them up alive, as they might kill him; yet if Pete were killed no one would care, as he is a sort of a renegade, and does not always sleep in the same lodge, from fear of being attacked at night. He was with the Bloods when the messenger was there. The messenger learned among the Bloods that they thought they were not going to be molested by the troops, but they believed the Piegiens would be punished, or those of the Piegiens who had committed crimes, because General Sully had told them so. The Bloods, therefore, seemed to be indifferent to the matter. They were encamped above and near the trading post. That is the reason they gave for being separated from the Piegiens, who were encamped below the post. This differs from what the Indians told General Sully at the conference, where they claimed that the South Piegiens were innocent as well as the Bloods, thus throwing all the blame on the Indians not so generally ranging south of the line. The Piegiens were encamped on the Marias all the way down from the trading post to the Goose Bill, thirty miles from Benton. The messenger gave the localities of the particular encampments of Mountain Chief's, Bear Chief's, and other bands of Piegiens, both those called friendly and the unfriendly, and, what was important, informed me that if sent with any expedition against the Piegiens—and it was designed to send him—he thought he could distinguish the marauding bands it was contemplated to strike from those not intended to be punished upon seeing the Indians, and could inform the commanding officer. I obtained from this messenger other points of information of some interest, which it is not necessary to recur to here. His statements were sufficiently confirmed by other testimony to entitle them to credit. On the 10th of January I telegraphed to General Sully to direct Lieutenant Pease, agent of the Blackfeet, then



at Fort Benton, to meet me at Fort Shaw. General Sully complied with my request, and Lieutenant Pease reached Fort Shaw on the 13th. Lieutenant Pease does not reside at the agency of these Indians. Being also agent for other tribes, he generally stays at Fort Benton, a more central point. He informed me that not having been long agent of the Blackfeet—he was appointed last summer—he had no intimate knowledge of their affairs. The criminal acts which had been committed by the Indians, he thought, as he had before reported, were chargeable principally to the Piegiens. He had no information as to anything being done by the Indians toward securing murderers or stolen stock. From what he said, I gathered that the condition of Indian affairs at the north was unpromising. He attributed a great deal of the trouble to an abundance of whisky among the Indians. There was evidently want of harmony between him and the commanding officer at Benton.

On the 10th of January, I telegraphed to General Sully as follows:  
 \* \* \* \* \* “I would be glad to know what definite period you fix as that beyond which you will wait no further for the compliance of Indians with their promises to bring in property, &c. If you have any information touching this point, please let me know.”

I received the same day the following reply: \* \* \* \* \* “Two weeks is the time I thought to give the Indians. Better send messenger to Riplinger, trader on Marias, to see what the Indians are doing toward carrying out their promises.” (As reported, I had anticipated this by sending a messenger to the Marias; not directly to Mr. Riplinger, for that I did not care for, but the messenger saw him.)

On the 11th, General Sully wrote me that he had telegraphed to Mr. Eastman, in charge of the Northwest Fur Company, at Fort Benton, (at which place it is quite likely any Indian movements on the Marias would be known,) to ascertain if he knew of anything being done toward the recovery of stolen stock, &c. Mr. Eastman replied that “he had heard nothing, and that Big Lake was in Benton on the 10th.” (Big Lake was one of the chiefs who promised General Sully to get his people and go north for stock.) He added in a note to General Sully, dated the 13th of January, as follows:

It has been reported to me, and I give it to you for what it is worth, that Big Leg said while here that he was going to leave his tribe; that he had talked with them about going to war, and they would not listen. It is my opinion that the Indians will do nothing, either regarding stolen stock or capturing these men. These men who are running back and forth from the camps tell them that the whites won't fight; and Mr. Riplinger tells me that the only thing you can't make them believe is that the whites will fight. \* \* \* \* \* I have seen another party who says that Big Leg told him that he was going to bring part of his band into the agency; that they had stopped making robes; that he would not fight the whites; and that his young men would not listen to him.

General Sully also said in his note “that he thought it would be a good thing to give those Piegiens a scare, particularly the Mountain Chief's band;” although he feared that such was the case with which the reports of movements would be carried to the Indians, through half-breeds and whisky-sellers, that our troops would find no Indians south of the line.

On the 13th I telegraphed to General Sully as follows:

Your letter received. Messenger sent to the Marias and the agency returned last night. No serious efforts among Piegiens generally to comply with promises to you. Little Wolf has sent two boys to Belly River for mules. Mountain Chief and others doing nothing. No great hope. Mountain Chief encamped separately from Bloods. Two weeks up to-morrow. What do you say to the best policy now? You know the situation. Reply by telegraph.

General Sully replied by telegram, on the same day, as follows:

Under the circumstances, as you telegraph, I would, if possible, capture Mountain Chief and some of his principal men, and hold them as hostages until the nation fulfill their promises to me.

On the 13th General Sully wrote me to the same effect, but more at length:

I am still of the same opinion in regard to a campaign against the Blackfeet. That the parties most deserving punishment will not receive their just rewards without we can cross the frontier into the camps of the Blackfeet there; and until this can be done no permanent good will result from any movements of troops. However, as some of the most active members of the late marauding parties did belong to Mountain Chief's band—although it is said these individual Indians are, at present, north of the line—it would be well to show them we are in earnest; and the seizure of old Mountain Chief, and about half dozen other principal men of his band, would, I think, cause the rest to go after stolen animals. It will be a difficult matter to make any movements without the Indians getting information through the half-breeds and whisky-sellers at Sun River and Benton. \* \* \* But whatever is done, precaution should be taken to give Mr. Riplinger and his trading party of ten men, who are now on the Marias, military protection, for it won't do for them to remain there after any move is made; they would very likely be massacred, and all their very valuable stock of goods destroyed. \* \* \* I also gave a wagon-master of Mr. Kirkendall's permission to go north with the Indians to see if he could not get some of the mules stolen lately. For these reasons I would recommend that, for the present, no blood should be shed, if it is possible to avoid it.

I was quite unprepared for this recommendation, in view of the opinions and recommendations of General Sully up to the 13th of January. He had left an official copy of his report of January 3 with General De Trobriand, at about its date, wherein he recommends the commander of the district (General De Trobriand) "not to retard any preparation he may contemplate, so that he may be ready to strike, if necessary, should it prove that the chiefs cannot carry out their good intentions with their own people." The papers show that through his reports to the Indian Bureau (backed by the representations of the citizens of Montana) of the bad acts and dispositions of these Indians, and of his inability to mend matters without military activity and assistance, he had, in fact, procured the issuing of an order from the War Department for military action. He had been so convinced that a campaign was called for that he thought considerable additions should be made to the troops in the Territory. He had contemplated, if authorized, to conduct the operations himself. Before final measures were taken, he had resorted to negotiation; that had failed. The chiefs could not carry out their "good intentions." The necessary inference was that the time had come for General De Trobriand to "strike" as contemplated.

The experience and character of General Sully, as well as his official position, lent to his recommendation due weight in my mind; but I could not feel that the measure he now proposed would fully meet the case.

It certainly was very desirable that blood should not be shed if it were possible to avoid it, for other considerations beside those brought forward by General Sully—those of humanity and of duty. But then there is the duty of providing security for the lives and property of the citizens of Montana, and that is imperious. To shrink from doing what the occasion called for as necessary, no matter how severe, is to incur responsibility for future massacres of men, women, and children, for the destruction of homes and the plunder and ruin of the settlements. The question then was, what did the occasion call for as necessary? To this General De Trobriand had answered, A sharp and severe blow upon some guilty bands as an example to the rest. A view of the situation seemed to me to justify his opinion. The inhabitants of Montana had, in truth, suffered much from the aggressions of these Indians. The aggressors

were perfectly uncontrollable by the Indian Department, which had especially called for the assistance of the military. Their incursions had been repeated over and over again. Things were getting worse, and in fact war parties were actually out at this time. (General Sully, in a letter of the 16th of January, received after I left Fort Shaw, informed me that he had just heard from Mr. Eastman, at Benton, who said, "There are two war parties of Piegons out, one of twelve men on the Marias; the other made an attack on Healy's party, hunting buffalo on Eagle Creek. It is also reported a very large party are on their way down the Missouri after Crows or anybody else.") It was the universal belief among the citizens and military that there was no hope of a cessation of hostile acts on the part of these Indians unless the strong arm of the government made itself felt upon them. The authorized trade among them even thought so. Warnings and negotiations had failed; they had been threatened with punishment by their superintendent; they had been required to make reparation and restitution, but they would not, although they had murderers and stolen stock in their camps. They could not be made to believe that the whites would fight them. Some of the offending bands were now within reach. No doubt the Blackfeet north of the line had done mischief, and their safety gave them impunity and therefore encouragement. But it is to be remembered that the object is to stop aggressions for the future, not to punish for the past. To bring these reckless and deluded savages to their senses, a single blow on any guilty band would be probably as efficacious as more extended operations. If so, such a plan certainly would be more sparing of blood and better on all other accounts, both for the interests of the frontier and those of the Indians themselves, than a war against the hostile Blackfeet tribes, including those north of the line, even if we had proper authority to cross the border. Beside, if the occasion called for anything at all it called for it now, and now an opportunity for success presented itself.

To attempt to surprise an Indian band and capture prisoners without bloodshed would be ordinarily to attempt an impracticability. A combat and consequent loss of life would be inevitable, or else there would be the flight of the Indians and total failure—a worse condition of things than if no operations had been undertaken at all. This form of coercion would be totally ineffectual to produce the promised reparation and restitution, if the hostages could be obtained, without some measure of punishment. These marauders were, as seen in the correspondence, indifferent and reckless, generally shuffling off their guilt upon others when accused; under no control from the older men if these attempted to exercise any good influence over them; pretending peace when they meant plunder and murder, and were satisfied of their impunity. Failure to punish them as threatened would have been badly construed and have strengthened their sense of their impunity. Had the Bloods received sharp castigation immediately after the murder of the party of immigrants (of Fisk's train) in 1867, it is believed that much of the subsequent mischief, chargeable to the Blackfeet, would have been averted.

Without reciting the Indian aggressions of the last two or three years, I now proceed to give an account of such only as have occurred since last July, and for which the Blackfeet, and principally the Piegons, are responsible. The record is not claimed to be complete, but the narrative is believed to include no fictitious incident.

On the 16th of July, 1869, two men were attacked by Indians, near Benton; both died. The Indians were Piegons. Their object was plunder of the horses. In retaliation, two Indians supposed to be guilty

were hung by the whites of Benton. Two suspected Indians were also killed. (It is doubted whether these suspicions were well founded.)

In the early part of August, a hay train, belonging to the contractor for Camp Cooke, was attacked and corralled for half a day by the Blackfeet, and four head of cattle were driven off. This occurred at Eagle Creek.

In the early part of August, a band (of Piegans, principally) attacked a government train conveying steam-engines, &c., from Camp Cooke to Fort Shaw. A fight took place between the teamsters and Indians on Eagle Creek. The train lost one man killed and twenty oxen. The Indians lost four killed and two wounded. The object was the plunder of the train.

In July and August, thirty-four horses, valuable stock, were stolen from the mail stations between Fort Shaw and Benton, and between Helena and Fort Shaw, by Piegan and other Blackfeet Indians. (See statement of Mr. Pollinger, division agent of the stage company.) These horses were some of them among the Indians on the Marias at the time of my messenger's visit there. The remainder were north of the line, some reported to be in possession of the Hudson's Bay Company's officers and others at the Edmonton House and the Mountain House.

On the 17th of August, Mr. Clarke was murdered by Piegans at his rancho, twenty miles from Helena. His son was also shot and left for dead. Mr. Clarke was killed by Peter, a Piegan Indian, a nephew of Clarke who had married an Indian woman. Bear Chief, Black Weasel, Eagle's Rib, Black Bear, and twenty other Indians of Mountain Chief's band were believed to be present on the occasion of the murder. This event is probably correctly described by General De Trobriand as traceable to family quarrels; yet it was a brutal massacre that naturally shocked and alarmed the settlers. Mr. Clarke was a well known citizen, and his daughter, an educated and estimable young lady, had many friends in Helena.

Another settler married to an Indian woman, J. Cable, has been threatened with a fate similar to Clarke's.

September 28, Mr. James Quail was murdered at Silver City, some seven miles from Helena. As is seen in the correspondence quoted, the responsibility of this event is charged by General De Trobriand upon white men, the circumstances appearing as if he had been killed for his watch and a considerable sum of money believed to be upon him. He was not scalped. An intelligent citizen, a physician, who saw the body, informed me that though it was not mutilated as, reported, there was no doubt in his mind of the murder being committed by Indians. Another citizen, well known in Helena, who went up to the agency with General Sully to try and get back some stolen mules, informed me that he learned there from the Indians that it was known among them that a member of one of their tribes committed the murder, (Little Eagle.)

December 13, a party of hunters were attacked by Piegans, one man killed and one wounded, forty-five miles from the post of Fort Shaw. The Indians were driven off; troops followed them; but the pursuit was unsuccessful.

December 16, the train of Mr. Kirkendall, government contractor for transportation, taking supplies for the Indian Department to the Gros Ventres, was raided only thirty-five miles from Fort Shaw by Piegans, who carried off thirty valuable mules. They were driven north of the line. A Piegan of one of the lower bands, but latterly run off north, named White Man's Dog, was the chief actor in this theft.

December 22, some Blackfeet Indians wantonly destroyed or carried

off the property of J. Day, at his rancho at Dauphin Rapids; they had a fight of some hours with a squad of soldiers from Camp Cooke, with no advantage to the latter.

Other attacks on persons have taken place, but they are not fairly attributable to these Indians, as far as I can learn.

The following additional losses of animals are stated by individuals (by name, see list appended) to have been occasioned by Indian thefts since last summer, as per statement with reference to indemnity, on file in the office of the superintendent of Indian affairs in Helena.

The actual losses are, it is to be observed, by no means limited to these, for much has doubtless not yet been reported to the superintendent. These claims have not been investigated:

July, August, and September, Deer Lodge Creek .....	50
September, Silver Creek .....	10
During the summer, Trinity Gulch .....	19
April, Indian Creek .....	3
During the summer, Rock Creek .....	6
During the summer, St. Peter's Mission .....	6
April to August, Diamond City .....	12
August and September, Prickly Pear Valley, near Helena .....	15
During summer, Georgetown .....	29
September and October, New York Gulch .....	11
During summer, near Fort Benton .....	5
During summer, Washington Gulch .....	12
During summer, Deep Creek Valley .....	19
Total .....	197

See also affidavits for other stock sold north of the line, robbed from the settlements.

The losses of stock during the last two years are variously estimated from four hundred to six hundred head.

The Blackfeet is a general name for three groups of Indians—the Bloods, the Piegans, and those Blackfeet who are neither Bloods nor Piegans. General Sully estimates the number of these groups as follows: Bloods, five hundred lodges; Piegans, seven hundred lodges; other Blackfeet, two thousand lodges. I am inclined to think this estimate too large. Another source furnishes the following numbers: Bloods, five hundred lodges; Piegans, three hundred lodges; other Blackfeet, two hundred lodges only.

The disposition of these Indians toward the whites, on the whole, is doubtful—varying from indifference to hostility. There is no general tribal organization among them with a recognized head chief. They are divided up into small bands more or less powerful. The chiefs of these bands, particularly if they are old, have no control over their young men. There are so-called friendly bands, indeed, where the chiefs and headmen are disposed to be friendly, but where the majority in numbers and influence are disposed to war; there are some bands actively hostile.

In the present condition of the tribes on this side of the line, it is, in my judgment, extremely improbable that they will adopt reservation life.

These Indians are well armed and provided with ammunition, which they readily obtain north of the line. They have some Henry and Spencer rifles among them.



The Bloods are generally peacefully disposed, though their young men will join raiding parties.

The Blackfeet north of the line are either indifferent or hostile.

The Piegiens are mostly inclined to hostility. The chiefs known to be friendly are, Heavy Runner, Big Lake, (or Leg,) Little Wolf, and The Boy; the others are either doubtful or positively hostile. These are principally responsible for the recent murder and thefts described. Among the principal chiefs and noted men of the latter class are Mountain Chief and his two sons, the elder of whom shot young Clarke. Peter, (full Indian, but speaks English,) the murderer of Clarke; Star, a half Mexican and half Piegan, a noted murderer; Crow Top, a noted murderer; The Cut Hand, Eagle's Rib, (one of the party that murdered Mr. Clarke,) Bear Chief, (of the party that murdered Clarke,) Under Bull, Red Horn, Bull's Head, The White Man's Dog, and the Black Weasel, (of the party that murdered Clarke.)

The facts and considerations presented in the foregoing pages I reported in brief to the Lieutenant General by telegraph, on the 13th instant, asking for his instructions. The telegram was as follows:

Condition of Indian affairs not alarming, but depredations have been repeated, and a man killed. Public excitement not great, but military action a necessity. General De Trobriand thinks impunity encourages Indians, and recommends prompt chastisement. General Sully two weeks ago visited Piegan agency; found most chiefs too drunk to meet him. He met four chiefs, good Indians, and told them the United States meant war on marauding Indians, and would cross British line, &c., and that they must get thieves to return stolen property, and bring in principal offenders. The chiefs promised to get stock, though not to bring in men, but to have them killed. Two weeks given as time allowed for this. Time really up to-morrow. I sent messenger to Northwest Fur Company's trading post on Marias River. Indians there and not far from there. Messenger returned last night; reports feeble efforts only are made for recovery of stock. Pretence of a desire for peace and to try and get stock, but there is no great hope of success. Much stock north in British possessions. Young and hostile cannot be controlled by old and more friendly. No definite announcement of failure to General Sully yet. The Bloods do not expect punishment, but expect troops to punish bad Piegiens. Bloods and Piegiens encamped along Marias River now. Plenty of buffalo north. Mountain Chief's band of Piegiens small, but great rascals; encamped separately. They are seventy-five (75) miles from here. General De Trobriand thinks he can strike them without molesting friends, either Piegiens or Bloods. There is reasonable ground for his opinion; but he wishes to chastise. General Sully is moderate, and now advises that Mountain Chief's band be captured and held as hostages until the nation fulfills promises to him. I have not interfered with military arrangements. The cavalry will reach here to-morrow from Fort Ellis. It will not be ready for movement before Sunday or Monday. It will endeavor to surprise the camp. I fear information will reach Indians, but trial should be had. Of course, British line will not be crossed.

Question is, whether chastisement or capture for hostages should be the principal design. Practical result of movement a simple one, if there be result, would probably be killing and capturing, both.

Under all the circumstances, how far should the opinion of General Sully as to scope of operations govern the military? I think the military commander (Colonel Baker) should be allowed to proceed generally according to the circumstances under which he finds himself in his operations, having in view securing the fulfillment of promises, &c., and the best interests of the service. I propose to leave here to-morrow afternoon on return to Chicago. Hope to reach there before the end of month—possibly by 26th.

On the 15th, the Lieutenant General telegraphed me as follows:

If the lives and property of the citizens of Montana can best be protected by striking Mountain Chief's band, I want them struck. Tell Baker to strike them hard.

On the 15th of January I had an interview with Colonel Baker, who, with four companies of the Second Cavalry, had reached Fort Shaw. I communicated to that officer and to General De Trobriand the instructions contained in the Lieutenant General's telegram; I requested that the safety of Mr. Replinger and his trading post might be provided for.

I learned that it was the design of General De Trobriand to send, as



guide, with Colonel Baker the messenger whom I had dispatched to the Marias. Young Clarke had also volunteered to go as guide in order to avenge the murder of his father. Thus certainty was secured as far as possible that no friendly Indians would be molested.

The following is the text of the instructions given by General De Trobriand to Colonel Baker:

In compliance with instructions from superior headquarters you will proceed with your command, without any more delay than may be required by the present condition of the weather, to chastise that portion of the Indian tribe of Piegiens, which, under Mountain Chief or his sons, committed the greater part of the murders and depredations of last summer and last month in this district.

The band of Mountain Chief is now encamped on the Marias River, about seventy-five miles from this post, at a place called the Big Bend, and can easily be singled out from the other bands of Piegiens, two of which should be left unmolested, as they have uniformly remained friendly, viz., the bands of Heavy Runner and Big Lake—those two chiefs, with Little Wolf, are the three who met General Sully at the agency a short time ago.

All the Piegiens now on the territory of the United States are encamped along the Marias River, from the trading post near the Conlice down to near the mouth of the river, and this section of the country, up to the frontier line of the British possessions, will be the field of your operations. Above the trading post and at a short distance, is encamped about half of the Bloods; this tribe is peacefully inclined, and although a number of stolen horses are reported to be in their camp, they should be left alone and not included in your expedition for the present. The Blackfeet proper, being far away in the British possessions and not considered as hostile, will not come in your way.

All necessary information in regard to the location of the several Indian encampments, and the character of the roaming Indians who may fall in your hands, during your operations, will be furnished to you by the guide who is ordered to report to you.

When you strike the Marias River, or at such a time when it may not any more convey premature information, you will leave or send a small detachment of ten men, under a non-commissioned officer, to the trading post of the Northwest Fur Trading Company, for the protection of the establishment during your operations.

Beside your command of four companies of cavalry, Captain and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Highbee is ordered to report to you with the mounted detachment of Fort Shaw and the necessary transportation.

Captain Torrey, Thirteenth Infantry, is ordered to report to you with his company as a guard and as escort for the train of supply that will have to be left behind, so as to leave the whole of your cavalry disposable for action. A guard will also be furnished you to go with the train.

Beyond these general instructions it is deemed unnecessary to add anything. The details as to the best way to surprise the enemy and to carry on successfully the operations is confidently left to your judgment and discretion, according to circumstances and to your experience in such expeditions.

On the 17th instant I telegraphed from Helena to the headquarters of the division as follows:

Reached here last night from Fort Shaw. Lieutenant General's telegram of the 15th instant received. I think chastisement necessary. In this Colonel Baker concurs. He knows the General's wishes. He will move to-day. Some horses and mules stolen from citizens in various Indian camps on the Marias; among them camps of Indians pretending to be innocent. Also murderers there. The stock the Indians promised Sully to deliver up, the latter to have killed. I thought, well, Colonel Baker's design should be extended to include the coercion of Indians to keep this promise, if he could do so prudently. Hence my suggestion at close of long dispatch. But this is only following up of stroke directed by the Lieutenant General, and Colonel Baker may be relied on to do all that the general would wish in the way of vigorous and sufficient action. If the Indians do not get wind of movement and the weather has been opportunely severe, so as to measurably prevent that danger, I anticipate best results. In any case good, and no harm, will be done. I leave for Corinne in the morning.

I reached these headquarters on my return on the 28th instant, and reported verbally to the Lieutenant General.

I beg leave to add that, in my judgment, at least half of the cavalry at Fort Ellis should be transferred to Fort Shaw, and that an outpost consisting of a detachment drawn from Fort Shaw should be established near the head of Sun River, or the Dearborn, at some suitable place to observe the lines of Indian travel along the base of the mountains and

through Cadotte's Pass. A detachment of half a company of infantry, a part of which should be mounted, to be relieved from time to time by other detachments from Fort Shaw, would answer every purpose.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAS. A. HARDIE,

*Inspector General.*

Brevet Major General GEORGE L. HARTSUFF,

*Assistant Adjutant General, Military Division of the Missouri.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,

*Chicago, Illinois, December 27, 1869.*

GENERAL: It will be seen by the accompanying papers that General De Trobriand and General Sully differ very much in their judgment in reference to the condition of Indian affairs in the district of Montana. From these papers it appears that General Sully so represented affairs in Montana as to cause the Secretary of the Interior to apply to the General-in-Chief for additional protection for the people, and, on this application as a basis, the General authorized me to punish the Piegan Indians, and orders were sent accordingly to General De Trobriand, (copies inclosed for your information.)

On the date of November 22, General De Trobriand makes a report on the condition of Indian affairs, from which it will be seen that the reports of Indian depredations are exaggerated; and, also, a second report of the date of November 26, from which it appears that the condition of Indian affairs is by no means alarming.

After a careful examination of this correspondence, I desire that you proceed without delay to Montana and make a thorough examination of the subject, and if there is any danger of Indians being molested who are friendly, you are authorized to suspend all operations undertaken under the orders emanating from the General-in-Chief until your report is received, or until your return to these headquarters.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. H. SHERIDAN,

*Lieutenant General.*

Brevet Major General JAS. A. HARDIE,

*Inspector General Military Division of the Missouri, Chicago, Ill.*

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA,

*December 18, 1869.*

GENERAL: I have just received the following telegram from General Sully at Helena, but defer taking action until I hear from General De Trobriand, to whom I have just dispatched. In case the information proves correct, however, I shall recommend that three hundred volunteers (mounted) be immediately called into service for six months, as other cavalry cannot well get there during the winter, and that General Sully, superintendent of Indian affairs in Montana, be placed in command of the troops at least for that period—he can control the volunteers and protect the friendly Indians as well. It is singular, however, if this be true, that I have not heard from General De Trobriand.

I have also received a communication from General Morrow, at Fort

Buford, dated November 3, stating that the teamsters of a train of Duffee & Peck's, which arrived from Fort Buford from Fort Peck, report to him that fourteen men of a train from Benton were killed in camp while asleep by the Santee Sioux a few days previous. I am not confident that this report is true, but have sent the information to Montana in order that it may be investigated.

GENERAL HANCOCK,  
*Major General Com'g.*

Brevet Major General GEORGE L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General, Military Division of the Missouri.*

HELENA, MONTANA, *December 17, 1869.*

GENERAL HANCOCK: Learn by telegraph that Tuesday night Indians attacked eleven men near Shaw, killed one, wounded one, and stole thirty mules. If you are going to strike a blow you have not cavalry enough. It would be well to raise three hundred volunteers.

GENERAL SULLY.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, December 28, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt by mail of copies of the following documents: Telegram of General Sully to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 6, 1869; letter of the Commissioner, E. S. Parker, to General Sherman, December 8, 1869, with indorsement of the Adjutant General; letter of instructions of Lieutenant General Sheridan to Major General Hancock, December 10, 1869; telegram of General Hancock to me, December 12, 1869.

The result will show in a week or two whether the opinion of General Sully that "a demand made for the late murderers and stolen property" will be acceded to by the Indians. For myself, I do not believe it. General Sully arrived here on Saturday, the 25th instant. I had immediately a long talk with him in reference to his plan, and he agreed not to avail himself of the telegraphic orders of December 12, and to make his demands to the Indian chiefs without making any military demonstration. This point is very important, as the appearance of a military force at the agency would have had no other effect than to scare away the hostiles out of our reach; and even as it is, I am not sure that the result will be otherwise.

On the same day that General Sully left Helena the public papers announced that he was going to meet the Indian chiefs, and, with a strong military assistance, enforce upon them his demands for the delivery of the murderers, &c. Some Indians were at Benton when the news reached there, and at once it was communicated to the bands scattered on the Marias. I am informed this morning that they immediately began to concentrate in larger forces.

General Sully will meet the chiefs at the agency on the Teton River (thirty-five miles from Shaw) in the first days of January. If he does not succeed (and I don't think he will) I will be ready to act promptly; but the question is whether his demand will not alarm the Indians into a general skedaddle across the line—a disappointment which I tried to prevent by my telegram of December 22. My most earnest wish is that my provisions as to the result of General Sully's action be not realized;

but the major general commanding may appreciate now how our chances of success in chastising the Piegons are lessened by it. However, nothing will be neglected to accomplish this object, and to make an example which has become absolutely necessary to the peace and security of the Territory.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Col. Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Commanding.*

Brevet Brig. Gen. O. D. GREENE, U. S. A.,

*Ass't Adj't Gen'l Dep't of Dakota, St. Paul, Minnesota.*

A true copy:

J. T. MCGINNISS,

*Lieut. Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Maj. U. S. A., A. A. A. Gen.*

FORT SHAW, MONTANA TERRITORY,

*January 3, 1870.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the result of my late visit to the Teton River to meet the chiefs of the Blackfeet bands. I left here on the 1st instant, with twenty-five, and reached the Teton the same afternoon. There I met very few of the Blackfeet; among them were Heavy Runner, Little Wolf, and Big Lake, Piegan chiefs, and Grey Eyes, a Blood chief. I was disappointed in not meeting more of the principal men of the nation; but when my messenger reached the camp he found the Indians very much intoxicated, and some of the headmen so much overcome with the effects of liquor that it was impossible for them to meet me. This has been their frequent condition since they have moved within striking distance of Benton, and there appears to be no means of stopping this evil. This I have already reported to you by letter.

I had a talk with what Indians that were there the night of my arrival, and the next morning at their agency. I told them that the government, tired out with the repeated aggressions of their people, were determined to make war against them as the only way to protect the lives and property of the whites. That if we made war they need not think that the northern boundary would stop our troops from pursuing them; that we intended to cross the line and pursue them in the British possessions. These Indians protested that they were not responsible for the conduct of the Blackfeet Indians; that they were innocent, and begged if war *must* be made that they might not be involved—that is, the Bloods and South Piegons; and, finally, they agreed to go to their camp, and with their men to move north and bring back all the stolen stock they could get; but they could not promise me to deliver up the three principal men connected with late murders, for they could not take them. However, they agreed to kill them if they could, and bring in their dead bodies. I have little faith in their carrying out this part of their promise. From what these Indians say, and from what the whites and half-breeds tell me, I do not believe the Bloods have had anything to do with the late trouble. A portion of the Bloods, with their head chief, are still north of the line; still, no doubt, some of their young men have taken a hand in stealing stock. A portion of the Piegons, under Bull's Head, an old chief, are hostile, and are still north of the line. The camps of that portion of the Piegons who profess to be friendly, and also of the Bloods, are no doubt frequently visited by Indians known to be

hostile; but these Indians do not tarry there long, nor have they in their camps any stolen stock—that is, so far as I can learn. The Blackfeet Indians living in the British possessions, a part of the same nation who live north of the line, are the Indians who have committed nearly all of the thefts that have been committed in this Territory for the last few years. The train of mules run off a few days ago, while transporting government stores, is known to have been taken by them, and has been seen in possession of the British Indians; also large numbers of animals lately stolen in this Territory have been seen by reliable citizens of Montana sold by British Blackfeet Indians to citizens at or near Edmonton House, one of the Hudson's Bay trading-posts on the Saskatchewan. The Indian chiefs all tell me the temptation for their young men to steal is so great that they cannot always control them, for they have a ready market for all they can drive across the frontier, and that fine American horses and large mules bring a very good price. Another Hudson's Bay trading-post, west of Edmonton House, on the same stream, called the Mountain Post, is also a favorite horse market of the Indians.

From all I can learn the difficulties with the Indians is more a matter between the States and the English government than between the United States and the Indians, and if the English government cannot protect their savages and half-breeds, they should at least allow our troops to cross the line, into that unsettled portion of their territory, to deal with these robbers ourselves. Any war commenced against the Blackfeet will be a farce and a useless expenditure of money, without we can follow them up into their own country. In talking with the Indians the other day, I took it upon myself to tell them we had permission from the English government to cross the line with our troops, and I noticed it had more effect on them and the half-breeds, to bring them to terms, than anything I had said. These Blackfeet look upon the British line as their safeguard from any attack. I hope my mission to the Piegiens and Bloods may be a success, yet I am not over-sanguine. Two or three weeks will determine. In the mean time I would recommend the commander of the district not to retard any preparations he may contemplate, so that he may be ready to strike, if necessary, should it prove that these chiefs cannot carry out their good intentions with their own people.

I have furnished the commanding general of this district with a copy of this letter.

With much respect, your obedient servant,

ALF. SULLY,

*United States Army, Superintendent Indians.*

Hon. COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,

*Washington, D. C.*

A true copy:

J. T. MCGINNISS,

*First Lieut. Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Maj. U. S. A., A. A. A. Gen.*

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FORT SHAW, MONTANA TERRITORY,

*January 11, 1870.*

GENERAL: Your reports of September 9 and November 26, 1869, to headquarters department of Dakota, set forth generally that the condition of Indian affairs on this frontier was not then alarming; that although certain depredations had been committed by small parties of neighboring tribes of Indians, their number and import had been exag-

gerated, and that the main body of the Blackfeet, the Pend d'Oreilles, and the Bloods, and a part of the Piegons, have had nothing to do with these attacks, the responsibility of which rests upon a small band of Piegons, &c. You state as follows, (report of November 26, 1869:)

In conclusion, I do not see, so far, an opportunity for striking a successful blow. The only Indians within reach are decidedly friendly, and nothing could be worse, I think, than to chastise them for offenses of which they are not guilty. I speak not only with a view to justice and humanity, but for the best interests of the Territory.

Those who are known or suspected to be hostile are scattered along or beyond the frontier line. The arrival of several hundred recruits, in three detachments, is known to them, and keeps them all on the alert. At the first move they would disappear in the British territory. But let everything remain quiet during three or four months, and in the spring they will come back supposing that we will let the by-gones be by-gones. Then, I think, will be the best chance to give them a lesson of good effect toward putting an end to the murders and depredations among the settlements.

If, since the dates cited, events have occurred to modify the conclusions of those reports, will you be good enough to inform me what they are, and what are your present views.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. A. HARDIE,

*Brevet Major General United States Army,  
Inspector General Military Division of the Missouri.*

*Brevet Brigadier General P. R. DE TROBRIAND, U. S. A.,  
Commanding District of Montana, Fort Shaw, M. T.*

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HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, January 13, 1870.*

GENERAL: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 11th instant, in which, referring to my reports of September 9 and November 26, 1869, on the Indian affairs in this district, you ask me to inform you if, since the dates cited, events have occurred to modify the conclusions of these reports, what they are, and what are my present views.

In answer I have to state that events have occurred since November 26, which materially alter the condition of things. The first of these is the return of the Indians (Piegons and Bloods) on the Marias River about the middle of December, when, as seen by my previous reports, they were not expected to come there before the end of January or the month of February. This created an opportunity for striking the Piegons at once, which did not exist before. How I intended to promptly avail myself of it in accordance with instructions from superior headquarters is explained in my report of December 21, 1869, to department headquarters.

In the meantime General Sully, superintendent of Indian affairs in the Territory, proposed to make a demand on the Indians for the delivery of the murderers of Mr. Clarke and some other white men, and the recovery of animals stolen during last summer. This demand was to be backed by a military force, and the plan being approved in Washington I received the following orders by telegraph:

ST. PAUL, December 13, 1869.

Furnish General Sully what military assistance he may require to support any demand he may make for culprits for stolen horses with Indians in his jurisdiction. Place troops at such points as he may indicate during the operation. Acknowledge receipt by telegraph. (Confidential.)

By command of Major General Hancock:

O. D. GREENE,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*



This telegram had, of course, the effect of paralyzing any independent action on my part by putting the military forces of my command virtually at the disposal of the superintendent of Indian affairs in Montana. As this was, in my opinion, calculated to defeat the success of the contemplated expedition by giving alarm to the Indians and driving them back beyond the frontier line, without, as I believed, securing the compliance by them with the demands of General Sully, I attempted by a telegram to General Hancock to obtain a prevention of the interference of General Sully, but without success; and General Sully arrived at Fort Shaw on December 25. What took place in his council with *four* Indian chiefs at the agency on the Teton River is stated in his report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, a copy of which was furnished to this headquarters. I do not think it necessary to add anything as to the present condition of affairs, as your arrival at this post enabled you to ascertain it directly in all its details.

To come back to the object of your communication: the other events which took place to alter the condition of affairs during the month of December are:

1. An attack on a party of hunters at the head of Sun River Valley, forty-five miles from Fort Shaw, on the evening of December 13, in which one man was killed and another wounded by a band of Piegons.

2. The loss of a herd of thirty mules belonging to Mr. Kirkendall, government contractor, stolen during the night of December 16, near the Dearborn by the same band of Piegons, and not of Blackfeet, as erroneously reported by General Sully.

3. The breaking open of a log-house and stealing or destroying the provisions and other articles contained therein, near Camp Cooke; the pursuit of the marauders by the wood-choppers, re-enforced by a small detachment from Camp Cooke, and the fight which lasted several hours without result ascertained. This on the evening of the 22d and during the 23d of December.

These three attacks on white men, or on their properties, without any sort of provocation whatever, and occurring almost simultaneously and immediately upon the arrival of the Indians on the Marias River, show in what disposition they have returned, and how prompt they are to resume their murderous and plundering incursions, unfortunately unchecked during the past summer for want of means of repression.

It is my firm belief that they are greatly encouraged by their past impunity, and that to prevent the recurrence and increase of those depredatory raids upon the residents of the Territory, it has become necessary to inflict a punishment on the guilty parties, mostly Piegons. This not only to chastise the culprits, but also as a warning to prevent others, unconcerned so far in the past aggressions, to become accomplices and participators in new ones, which seem to be contemplated by the young red warriors, judging by their open boasts, as I am informed from various sources.

This, general, does not imply that my views are changed respecting the general disposition of the Blackfeet nation, including the three tribes, Blackfeet proper, Bloods, and Piegons. It is still my opinion that no state of war actually exists in the Territory, and that the majority of the Indians, especially among the Bloods, are peacefully disposed. But among them all, and principally among the Piegons, there is a certain number of ill-disposed and positively hostile young men which must be punished, as they cannot be controlled by the friendly chiefs, and are even openly sustained and protected by other chiefs, the most conspicuous of whom are Mountain Chief and his sons, with

their followers. These we must strike, and strike hard, so as to make an example.

So far as the striking goes, (provided the action of General Sully does not scare them away,) I can do it with the forces now at my command, as explained in my dispatch to General Hancock, of December 21, with this modification, that I will operate from the trading post down toward Benton, instead of from above Benton up toward the trading post. In that way I would cut the line of the Marias where the Indians are scattered, so as to leave out the Bloods who are encamped up the river above, and peaceably disposed, limiting the punishment to the Piegans, who are all below that point. And even among them I would be careful that two friendly bands of Heavy Runner and Big Lake be left unmolested, so as to single out Mountain Chief and his followers, who were, two days ago, still at the place known as the Big Bend. This, successfully accomplished, would not, according to all probabilities short of a certainty, bring any general war. The Blackfeet are all far away on the British Possessions and would not be touched; the Bloods would be left out; and, as they all expect it, the hostile Piegans would be punished alone, while the friendly ones would be spared. The moral and material result would, therefore, be, I am confident of it, what we may desire, and peace and security would be restored in the Territory at least for a time. Still every possible contingency must be taken into consideration, even the least probable, according to our calculations. Therefore I would respectfully submit, that in case of an extensive war, and serious hostilities in the spring, I shall need re-enforcements, principally cavalry, to carry it with vigor and effect. Until then, with my infantry stationed by detachments at different points which I can indicate to you on the map, and with the cavalry on the move, I shall be able to sufficiently protect the settlements by a strong defensive.

In conclusion, convinced that it is better to strike at once than to preserve indefinitely a passive attitude, and judging the present opportunity the best we can reasonably hope for, I have the honor to inform you that I am ready for action, and, after mature consideration, in no fear of the consequences.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Com'd'g.*

Brevet Major General J. A. HARDIE, U. S. A.,  
*Inspector General Military Division of the Missouri.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, Illinois, December 10, 1869.*

GENERAL: I have the honor to inclose herewith a telegram from General Sully, requesting military assistance to make certain demands on the Blackfeet tribe of Indians; also a communication from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the same effect, with an indorsement thereon from the General-in-Chief, directing me to give the necessary telegraphic orders.

I transmit the case to you, with the direction that you at once telegraph to the district commander to furnish such military assistance as the case requires.

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

Major General W. S. HANCOCK,  
*Commanding Department of the Dakota, St. Paul, Minn.*

[Telegram.]

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT DAKOTA,  
*Saint Paul, Minnesota, December 12, 1869.*

General ALFRED SULLY, *Superintendent Indian Affairs, Helena, Montana :*

General De Trobriand has this day been directed, by confidential telegram, to furnish you all the military assistance you may require to enforce your demands on the Indians of your jurisdiction. Also to place his troops at such points as you may indicate for the purpose. Please receipt.

W. S. HANCOCK,  
*Major General Commanding.*

Official copy :

O. D. GREENE,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

[Original by Telegraph.]

FORT BENTON, MONTANA TERRITORY,  
*December 18, 1869.*

General O. D. GREENE, *Assistant Adjutant General, St. Paul, Minn. :*

The two telegrams of this day received. On Monday, the 13th instant, a party of eleven men, hunting at the head of Sun River Valley, forty-five miles from Shaw, were attacked at 8 o'clock p. m. by twelve or fifteen Indians, supposed to be Piegans. The Indians were easily repulsed, one of the white men was wounded severely. No horse was captured. News reached the fort at 8 o'clock a. m. on the following day, the 14th. Two hours after, the mounted detachment was in pursuit under command of Lieutenant Guthrie, with three days' rations. They returned yesterday the 17th, after my departure from Shaw. All was reported by mail.

Second Lieutenant Bishop is assigned to Company B, stationed at Fort Benton. His services much needed.

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,  
*Brevet Brigadier General, Commanding.*

[Indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, January 12, 1870.*

A true copy. Respectfully forwarded to Brevet Major General J. A. Hardie, Inspector General Military Division of the Missouri, for his information.

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,  
*Colonel Thirteenth Infantry, Bvt. Maj. Gen. U. S. A., Commanding.*

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, December 21, 1869.*

SIR: Indian affairs in this Territory have assumed quite recently a new aspect, which is much more favorable to the execution of the plan

of the Lieutenant General for a winter expedition against the Piegons than could have been expected at this season of the year. Encouraged by the quiet attitude of the military, and the absence of all apparent war dispositions against them, the Piegons and Bloods have come back from the British possessions, and established their hunting camps along the Marias River, as announced in my telegram of the 18th instant, from Fort Benton. There they are within easy reach, and I propose to seize the opportunity and strike as soon as we are ready, which will be about the time indicated by the Lieutenant General. \* \* \* \*

If the cavalry was at hand I would go at it at once, and the work would be done before New Year's day. But, unfortunately for the promptitude of our movements, the communications between Fort Shaw and Fort Ellis are slow, and the distance is considerable. Between Helena and Fort Ellis there is no telegraph, and only a weekly mail, and a special messenger cannot travel the distance in less than five days from Fort Shaw. However, I will be able to avail myself of the tri-weekly express between Helena and Bozeman, to communicate more rapidly with Fort Ellis in any case of urgency. As it is, on the 6th of December I sent to Major Baker, Second Cavalry, the order to report in person, immediately after his arrival at Fort Ellis, to these headquarters "for consultation with the brevet brigadier general commanding the district, on matters affecting his command at Fort Ellis, Montana Territory, &c."

Since that time I have received a communication indorsed by him on the 3d of December, but for reasons unknown I have not yet seen him or heard of him otherwise. This delay is the more regrettable since no better opportunity can present itself to punish the parties guilty of the murders and depredations committed last summer. The most of them, if not all, are with the band of Mountain Chief. This band is now within easy reach from here, if the secret of our intention be kept, and I am very careful that nothing of it may be known or suspected.

Thirty-five miles behind Benton is a band of Piegons, at a place called Sweet Grass Hill. Further up is the camp of Mountain Chief, which I intend to strike first by a surprise, killing or capturing those who may be found there; then sweeping other bands of the Piegons congregated at or near the trading post lately established by Mr. Rieplinger for the North West American Fur Company, and further, if necessary. \* \*

I will send the cavalry force ahead unimpeded by wagons and baggage except ambulances, so as to enable them to strike with more rapidity; and the train will follow under a strong escort of a full company of infantry, or more if necessary, direct to the trading post, where the cavalry will find it after operating against Mountain Chief's camp.

I think this will do, and that if success attend the expedition no further operations will be necessary to bring the Piegons and others to such terms as the government will think proper to impose for the restoration of peace and the security of the Territory. But if against my hope and provisions, the Indian war on this frontier would assume a more serious aspect in the spring, then it would be undoubtedly necessary to send here re-enforcements of cavalry, to avoid the raising of companies of volunteers—a measure open to so many objections that it should be resorted to only in case of unavoidable necessity. I would mention that the weather, which was very mild up to the 18th instant, has become extremely cold, the mercury falling to 15° Fahrenheit (below zero) after a snow-storm which lasted all the day I was in Benton. This change in the weather is not without importance, as it is most likely to

keep the Indians wintering on the Marias River as long as we may wish them there for our purposes.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel Thirteenth Infantry, Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Commanding.*

*Brevet Brigadier General O. D. GREENE, U. S. A.*

*Assistant Adjutant General Department of Dakota,  
Saint Paul, Minnesota.*

P. S.—December 22.—Snowing again without interruption since yesterday evening.

A true copy :

J. T. MCGINNISS,

*First Lieut. Thirteenth Infantry, Bvt. Maj. U. S. A., A. A. A. G.*

FORT SHAW, *January 10, 1870.*

To General A. SULLY,

*Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Helena :*

I would like to see Lieutenant Pease, to get details of information about Indian matters. Please direct him by telegraph to come and see me here without delay. He is believed to be at Benton. I would be glad to know what definite period you fix as that beyond which you will wait no further for the compliance of Indians with their promises to bring in property, &c. If you have any information touching this point please let me know.

JAS. A. HARDIE,  
*Inspector General.*

Official :

J. T. MCGINNISS,  
*Acting Assistant Adjutant General.*

[By telegraph from Helena, January 10, 1870.]

To General HARDIE, *Fort Shaw :*

Pease is ordered to report to you. Two weeks is the time I thought necessary to give the Indians. Better send messenger to Replinger, trader on Marias, to see what the Indians are doing toward carrying out their promises.

ALF. SULLY,  
*Superintendent Indian Affairs.*

FORT SHAW, *January 13, 1870.*

General SULLY, *Helena :*

Your letter received. Messenger sent to the Marias and the agency returned last night. No serious efforts among Piegans generally to comply with promise to you. Little Wolf has sent two boys to Billy River for mules. Mountain Chief and others doing nothing. No great hope. Mountain Chief camped separately from Bloods. Two weeks up

to-morrow. What do you say as to the best policy now? You know the situation. Reply by telegraph.

JAMES A. HARDIE,  
*Inspector General.*

[By telegraph from Helena, January 13, 1870.—Received January 13, 1870.]

To General HARDIE, *Fort Shaw* :

Under the circumstances, as you telegraph, I would, if possible, capture Mountain Chief and some of his principal men and hold them as hostages till the nation fulfill their promise to me.

GENERAL ALF. SULLY.

On the 13th General Sully wrote me as follows :

SUPERINTENDENCY INDIANS,  
*Helena, Montana, January 13, 1870.*

GENERAL: I have received your telegraph and have answered it. I am still of the same opinion in regard to a campaign against the Blackfeet: that the parties most deserving punishment will not receive their just rewards without a force can cross the frontier into the camps of the Blackfeet there; and until this can be done, no permanent good will result from any movement of troops. However, as some of the most active members of the late marauding parties did belong to Mountain Chief's band, although it is said these individual Indians are at present north of the line, it would be well to show them we are in earnest, and the seizure of old Mountain Chief and about half a dozen other principal men of his band would, I think, cause the rest to go after the stolen animals. It will be a difficult matter to make any movement without the Indians getting information through the half-breeds and whisky-sellers at Sun River and Benton. Would it not be well, therefore, to give it out when the move is made, that the troops are started to cross the line to recapture stolen stock; that permission has been given our government to do so. Then, after the troops have passed the Marias, to double on the track at night, so as to reach Mountain Chief's camp by daylight. But whatever is done, precaution should be taken to give Mr. Replinger and his trading-party of ten men, who are now on the Marias, military protection, for it won't do for them to remain there. After any move is made they will very likely be massacred, and all their very valuable stock of goods destroyed. I also gave a wagon-master of Mr. Kirkendall permission to go north with the Indians, to see if he could not get back some of the mules stolen lately. For these reasons I would recommend that for the present no blood should be shed, if it is possible to avoid it. I think it is possible that the man who has gone after Kirkendall's mules will recover a part of them, as he goes, I understand, prepared to offer the Indians a suitable reward.

I wish you could see Mr. Albertson before leaving Shaw; he is the best-informed man about the Blackfeet in this country, and when sober, can give you valuable information.

I am, with respect,

ALF. SULLY,  
*United States Army, Superintendent Indians.*

General J. A. HARDIE,  
*Inspector General, Fort Shaw.*



JANUARY 6, 1870.

E. M. Pollinger, agent stage company, Gilmer and Salisbury, states that he lost thirty-seven horses in all, belonging to Wells, Fargo & Co., August 1, 1869; two stolen in the summer of 1868; one from Twenty-eight Mile Station, (twenty-eight miles from Benton,) and one from Dearborn Station, 1869; fifteen horses from Twenty-eight Mile Spring; and nineteen stolen from Dearborn, a portion in July, and a portion in August. These were stolen by Blackfeet Indians. Indians were seen by men of the company. Portion stolen at picket, and remainder from herd. All tracked north. Has learned from various parties at Benton and elsewhere, and especially from S. O. Silverman, No. 694 North Franklin street, Chicago, that this stock is now in possession of persons attached to the Hudson's Bay Company. Mr. Silverman saw a pair of gray horses with W. F. & Co. branded on shoulder, in a buggy, the property of an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company; he saw a pair of horses, same mark, working in a grist-mill; some B. H., some O. M. H. H., (9 Y,) some S. horses from California—except a pair of bay horses not marked, except J. A. and T. A. on the side, brought here.

*List of animals stolen by Indians during the summer of 1869, made up from descriptions received at the office of the Superintendent of Indians for Montana.*

Date.	Names of owners.	No. of animals.	Total.
1869.	DEER LODGE COUNTRY.		
July .....	John Ronan .....	1	
July .....	John Pilon .....	1	
August .....	John Canny .....	2	
August .....	M. V. B. Wason .....	11	
August .....	—Lahradu .....	9	
August .....	James Kennedy .....	5	
August .....	Martin Weller .....	1	
August .....	George N. Adams .....	1	
September .....	Michael Dooley .....	1	
September .....	Luse & Hunds .....	18	50
	SILVER CREEK.		
September .....	N. B. Thompson .....	1	
September .....	J. Johnson .....	1	
September .....	E. Bohnarath .....	1	
September .....	Amos Taylor .....	1	
September .....	J. C. Lloyd .....	1	
September .....	H. P. Brooks .....	1	
September .....	P. Flynn .....	1	
September .....	John Pool .....	1	
September .....	A. Johnson .....	1	
September .....	Charles Lee .....	1	10
	TRINITY GULCH.		
During the summer.	Samuel Ford .....	19	19
	INDIAN CREEK.		
April .....	Hugh Harper .....	3	3
	ROCK CREEK.		
During the summer.	Joe Cabbell .....	6	6

*List of animals stolen by Indians, &c.—Continued.*

Date.	Name of owners.	No. of animals.	Total.
ST. PETER'S MISSION.			
During the summer .	Jacob Smith.....	6	6
DIAMOND CITY.			
April.....	G. B. Smith.....	9	12
August.....	E. K. Hawley.....	1	
During the summer .	J. E. Murray.....	2	
PRICKLY PEAR VALLEY, NEAR HELENA.			
September.....	M. M. Lockwood.....	2	15
August.....	Alex. Dunning.....	4	
During the summer .	Travis & Brother.....	3	
During the summer .	R. H. Collins.....	4	
During the summer .	M. Moore.....	2	
GEORGETOWN.			
August.....	Nick Gredel.....	11	29
During the summer .	Christian Eden.....	1	
During the summer .	Robert Donohoe.....	1	
During the summer .	Robert Coburn.....	6	
During the summer .	Malcolm Morrow.....	10	
NEW YORK GULCH.			
September.....	Peter Holland.....	3	11
September.....	Spencer Brothers.....	3	
September.....	Thomas Cooney.....	2	
October.....	Frank Day.....	1	
During the summer .	Martin O'Heara.....	2	
NEAR FORT BENTON.			
During the summer .	George W. Houk.....	4	5
During the summer .	W. L. Stocking.....	1	
WASHINGTON GULCH.			
September.....	John Grey.....	1	12
September.....	Lewis Gosling.....	1	
September.....	Mike Kiley.....	2	
September.....	George Daley.....	1	
September.....	Peter Monques.....	1	
September.....	William O'Neal.....	1	
September.....	James Sterling.....	1	
September.....	L. D. Mail.....	1	
During the summer .	T. Thompson.....	3	
DEEP CREEK VALLEY.			
During the summer .	Hamilton & Whitson.....	19	19
			197

A true copy.

This does not include the thirty mules stolen lately from Kirkendall.

ALF. SULLY,  
United States Army, Superintendent.

FORT SHAW, *Montana*, January 13, 1870.

Brevet Major General GEORGE L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General, Chicago, Illinois :*

Condition of Indian affairs not alarming, but depredations have been repeated and a man killed. Public excitement not great, but military action a necessity. General De Trobriand thinks impunity encourages Indians, and recommends prompt chastisement. General Sully two weeks ago visited Piegan agency; found most chiefs too drunk to meet him. He met four chiefs, good Indians, and told them the United States meant war on marauding Piegans, and would cross British line, &c., and that they must get thieves to return stolen stock, and bring in principal offenders. The chiefs promised to try to get stock, though not to bring in men, but to have them killed; two weeks given for time allowed for this. Time really up to-morrow. I sent messenger north to Northwest Company's trading post on Marias River. Indians there and not far from there. Messenger returned last night. Reports feeble efforts only are made for recovery of stock. Pretense of desire for peace and to try to get stock, but there is no great hope of success. Much stock north in British possessions. Young and hostile cannot be controlled by old and more friendly. No definite announcement of failure to General Sully yet. The Bloods do not expect punishment, but expect troops to punish bad Piegans. Bloods and Piegans encamped along the Marias now. Plenty of buffalo north. Mountain Chief's band of Piegans small, but great rascals, encamped separately. They are seventy-five miles from here. General De Trobriand thinks he can strike them without molesting friends, either Piegans or Bloods. There is reasonable ground for his opinion; but he wishes to chastise. General Sully is more moderate, and now advises that Mountain Chief's band be captured and held as hostages until nation fulfills promises to him. I have not interfered with military arrangements. The cavalry will reach here to-morrow from Fort Ellis. It will not be ready for movement before Sunday or Monday. It will endeavor to surprise camp. I fear information will reach Indians, but trial should be had. Of course, British line will not be crossed.

Question is, whether chastisement or capture for hostages should be principal design. Practical result of movement, a simple one; if these be, result would probably be killing and capturing both.

Under all the circumstances, how far should the opinion of General Sully as to scope of operations govern the military?

I think the military commander (Colonel Baker) should be allowed to proceed generally according to the circumstances under which he finds himself in his operations, having in view securing the fulfillment of promises, &c., and the best interests of the frontier.

I propose to leave here to-morrow afternoon on return to Chicago. Hope to reach there before the end of month, possibly by 26th.

JAS. A. HARDIE,  
*Inspector General.*

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[By telegraph from Chicago, 15th, 1870.—Received January 15, 1870.]

To General JAMES A. HARDIE :

If the lives and property of citizens of Montana can best be protected by striking Mountain Chief's band of Piegans, I want them struck. Tell Baker to strike them *hard*.

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, January 16, 1870.*

COLONEL: In compliance with instructions from superior headquarters, you will proceed with your command, without any more delay than may be required by the present condition of the weather, to chastise that portion of the Indian tribe of Piegons which, under Mountain Chief or his sons, committed the greater part of the murders and depredations of last summer and last month in this district.

The band of Mountain Chief is now encamped on the Marias River, about seventy-five miles from this post, at a place called the Big Bend, and can be easily singled out from other bands of Piegons, two of which should be left unmolested, as they have uniformly remained friendly, viz., the bands of Heavy Runner and Big Lake. Those two chiefs and Little Wolf are the three who met General Sully at the agency a short time ago.

All the Piegons now on the territory of the United States are encamped along the Marias River, from the trading-post near the Red Coulée down to near the mouth of the river, and this section of the country, up to the frontier line of the British possessions, will be the field of your operations.

Above the trading-post, and at a short distance, is encamped about one-half of the Bloods. This tribe is peacefully inclined, and, although a number of stolen horses are reported to be in their camp, they should be left alone and not included in your expedition for the present. The Blackfeet proper, being far away in the British possessions and not considered as hostile, will not come in your way.

All necessary information in regard to the location of the several Indian encampments and the character of the roaming Indians who may fall in your hands during your operations will be furnished you by the guide who is ordered to report to you.

When you strike the Marias River, or at such a time when it may not any more convey a premature information, you will leave or send a small detachment of ten men, under a non-commissioned officer, to the trading-post of the Northwest Fur Company for the protection of the establishment during your operations.

Besides your command of four companies of cavalry, Captain and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Higbee is ordered to report to you with the mounted detachment at Fort Shaw and the necessary transportation.

Captain Torrey, Thirteenth Infantry, is also ordered to report to you with his company as a guard and escort for the train of supplies that you will have to leave behind, so as to leave the whole of your cavalry disposable for action. A guide will also be furnished you to go with the train.

Beyond these general instructions it is deemed unnecessary to add anything. The details as to the best way to surprise the enemy and to carry on successfully the operations are confidently left to your judgment and discretion, according to circumstances and to your experience in such expeditions.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Com'd'g.*

Brevet Colonel E. M. BAKER,

*Major Second Cavalry, Fort Shaw, M. T.*

[Indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, January 16, 1870.*

A true copy.

Respectfully furnished Brevet Major General J. A. Hardie, inspector general Military Division of the Missouri, for his information.

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,  
*Colonel Thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Com'd'g.*HELENA, *January 17, 1870.*Brevet Major General GEORGE L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General Military Division of Missouri, Chicago :*

Reached here last night from Fort Shaw. The Lieutenant General's telegram of 15th received. I think chastisement necessary. In this Colonel Baker concurs. He knew the General's wishes. He will move to-day. Some horses and mules stolen from citizens in various Indian camps on the Marias, among them camps of Indians pretending to be innocent. Also murderers there. The stock the Indians promised Sully to deliver up; the latter to have killed. I thought it well Colonel Baker's design should be extended to include the coercion of Indians to keep this promise, if he could do so prudently. Hence my suggestion at close of long dispatch. But this is only following up of stroke directed by Lieutenant General, and Colonel Baker may be relied on to do all that the General would wish in the way of vigorous and sufficient action. If Indians do not get wind of movement, and the weather has been opportunely severe so as to prevent measurably that danger, I anticipate best results. In any case good, and no harm, will be done. I leave for Corinne in the morning.

JAMES A. HARDIE,  
*Inspector General.*DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, D. C., October 12, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to forward herewith, for your information, a copy of a letter dated the 7th instant, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and the accompanying papers, setting forth the necessity of prompt action by the military to check the depredations committed by Indians in Montana, and respectfully to request that further reinforcements of the military force in that Territory be made, if possible, for the purpose stated.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. D. COX,  
*Secretary.*

Hon. SECRETARY OF WAR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS,  
*Washington, October 7, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of communications received from General Sully, superintendent of Indian affairs for Mon-

tana Territory, giving information of extensive depredations by Indians of that Territory, of the Blackfeet and Piegan tribes.

This bureau is powerless to control and prevent these depredations, and I respectfully suggest the communications above referred to be transmitted to the Secretary of War, with the request that the military take prompt measures to check them.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. S. PARKER,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. J. D. Cox,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

SUPERINTENDENCY INDIANS OF MONTANA,  
*Helena, Montana, September 27, 1869.*

Hon. E. S. PARKER, *Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C. :*

I have to report two more depredations committed by Indians, and supposed to be Blackfeet. This occurred a few days ago, at a place not over seven miles from this city.

A citizen by the name of Jarves Quait, well known to all the people here, lost some horses and mules. He started out to look for them, and not returning, search was made for him and his body found, pierced with arrows and horribly mutilated. Nine Indians were seen a few days before driving off the stock from that direction. The Indians have now been at this work for over two months, and as no one, neither the military nor the citizens, have made any attempt whatever to check them, they are daily becoming more bold in their operations. I am told, by those who have lost stock, that they ride up boldly in day time, in the presence of citizens, and take what animals they please. Of course all this comes to me with their complaint, thinking it is my duty to punish the Indians and recover their stolen property.

There are already over four hundred horses and mules known to have been stolen lately. That number, at \$150 each, will make an expensive claim against the government.

With much respect, your obedient servant,

ALFRED SULLY,  
*U. S. A., Superintendent Indian Affairs.*

BLACKFOOT AGENCY, *September 2, 1869.*

DEAR SIR: Having met with Major Pease, your special agent for the Blackfoot Indians, and from whom I learned your arrival in the country, connected with Indian matters, I thought it would not be amiss for me to drop you a few lines on that subject.

I have recently arrived from the interior, where I have been since last winter with the Bloods and Blackfeet Indians. These people are perfectly friendly to the whites, and up to the time I left there they evinced no disposition to be otherwise. They were no little surprised to hear of the frequent raids made upon the whites by the Piegans. These people always professed to be the friend and protector of the whites, living, as they have, in almost constant communication with Benton. I have not



seen those Indians to know for what reasons they are now committing these depredations upon the whites, but really my knowledge of their character for a great many years will not permit me to think that there exists a general hostile feeling among them; on the contrary, these depredations have been committed by a portion of the young rabble, over whom the chiefs have no control, and nothing but the strong arm of the government can control.

The non-ratification of treaties made with these Indians has had anything else but a tendency to keep them quiet; bound by no treaty stipulations, they think they have a perfect right to help themselves to any horses falling in their way.

I think, however, by keeping up this agency with a small amount of provisions, and to be given by the agent as their wants may require, will go a long way toward keeping them quiet, as the fast decreasing herds of buffalo, their only dependence for food, will reduce them wholly dependent on the government for support.

The Bloods and Blackfeet, who are distant, and live remote from each other, have no sympathy with the Piegiens, and of course will take no part with them in any way. I expect in a short time these two tribes will visit this place, when a little straightforward talk will convince them that the government is determined on making them keep the peace.

As I intend spending the winter here I may have the pleasure of meeting you here in person, when I can give you, in regard to these Indians, all the reliable information you may want.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALEX. CULBERTSON.

General A. SULLY.

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BLACKFOOT AGENCY, MONTANA TERRITORY,

*August 31, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the following in regard to the feeling and condition of the Indians of this agency.

The depredations committed upon the whites so far have been done by the Piegiens. The Bloods and Blackfeet have had nothing to do with it whatever, and the Bloods, in particular, are very anxious to come to this agency and comply in all respects with the conditions of the treaty made with them last year, provided they can be fed and taken care of according to the promises made them. In fact, by what I can learn, there is so far only a small band of the Piegiens that are or that have been interested in the depredations lately committed, and their moving north with their families has been caused by fear of being accused of having something to do with these depredations, and the false reports of irresponsible, mischief-making whites. They are very anxious to have the agency to be kept up according to the treaty, and appear to be well pleased by what they have heard of the superintendent of Indian affairs, and his intentions toward them.

I have employed twelve men, at the rate of \$50 per month. I could not get them less, and have employed one four-mule team to haul wood and to do such other work as has to be done about the agency.

I can get everything here that is required, with the exception of flour, of Mr. Hubbell, agent, and have written Mr. Hubbell about that, and expect he will attend to that soon. Any instructions you may wish to

send me please direct to Fort Shaw, as that is the nearest point from here.

Your obedient servant,

F. D. PEASE,  
*Acting Agent for Blackfeet Indians.*

General ALFRED SULLY,  
*Superintendent of Indians, Helena City, Montana.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, October 16, 1869.*

Official :

R. WILLIAMS,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

Official copy :

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,<sup>1</sup>  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, October 16, 1869.*

Respectfully referred to Lieutenant General P. H. Sheridan, commanding Military Division of the Missouri, for the necessary action.

By command :

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, November 15, 1869.*

Respectfully referred to the commanding general, department of Dakota.

By command of Lieutenant General Sheridan :

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, Illinois, October 21, 1869.*

SIR : I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the Secretary of the Interior, with accompanying reports of General Sully, Mr. Pease, and Mr. Culbertson, Indian agents in Montana, on the subject of depredations by the Piegan tribe of Indians.

We have had so few troops in Montana, on account of the expiration of enlistments, as to have been unable to do much against these Indian marauders, but the regiments are now filling up, and I think it would be the best plan to let me find out exactly where these Indians are going to spend the winter, and about the time of a good heavy snow I will send out a party and try and strike them. About the 15th of January they will be very helpless, and if where they live is not too far from Shaw or Ellis, we might be able to give them a good hard blow, which will make peace a desirable object.

To simply keep the troops on the defensive will not stop the murders ; we must occasionally strike where it hurts, and if the General-in-Chief

thinks well of this, I will try and steal a small force on this tribe from Fort Shaw or Ellis, during the winter.

It numbers about fifteen hundred men, women, and children, all told.  
Very respectfully,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

Brevet Major General E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant General United States Army, Washington, D. C.*

Official copy :

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, November 4, 1869.*

SIR: Referring to your communication of the 21st ultimo, relative to depredations by Piegan Indians in Montana, I have the honor to inform you that your proposed action as stated therein, for the punishment of these marauders, has been approved by the General of the Army.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant General.*

Lieutenant General P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Commanding Military Division of the Missouri,  
Chicago, Illinois.*

Official copy :

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

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HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, Illinois, November 15, 1869.*

GENERAL: I inclose you the correspondence which I referred to in my private note of the 5th instant. It will be seen from General Townsend's letter, that authority has been given to punish the Piegans if found within striking distance, and you are authorized by me to extend this authority to any of the Blackfeet who may have been engaged in the murders and robberies lately perpetrated in Montana.

Major Baker, who is now en route to Fort Ellis, is a most excellent man to be intrusted with any party you may see fit to send out. I spoke to him on the subject when he passed through Chicago.

It will be of no use to make the attempt unless the positions of the villages are well known. Then the greatest care should be taken to keep the Indians from gaining any information on the subject. It will be impossible to strike these murderers unless the greatest secrecy is maintained.

Very respectfully,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

Major General W. S. HANCOCK,  
*Commanding Department of Dakota, St. Paul, Minn.*

Official copy :

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF DAKOTA,  
St. Paul, Minnesota, November 10, 1869.

GENERAL: The major general commanding wishes you to make all possible endeavors to ascertain where the offending Blackfeet are wintering, and, if necessary to pay for the information, or to hire guides or scouts for such purposes, you are authorized to do so, reporting to these headquarters what action you have taken. Of course such information would be more valuable if it does not become a matter of notoriety that we are seeking it. If we can get at the Indians during the winter, by a quick, active march, we might surprise their camps.

The Blackfeet have been known to winter on Grand River, and at times on Belly River, in the British possessions. We cannot, of course, follow them there, but we can follow them to the line, and afterward, if necessary, make such demands upon the British government for the offenders as would, probably, at least prevent further hostilities on the part of the Indians.

The matter of climate should be inquired into. It is reported that the winters are not severe in the country in question, and that but little snow falls on the route there.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. CHANDLER,

*Acting Assistant Adjutant General.*

Brevet Brigadier General P. R. DE TROBRIAND,  
*Commanding District of Montana, Fort Shaw, M. T.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF DAKOTA,  
St. Paul, Minnesota, November 11, 1869.

Official copy. Respectfully furnished for the information of the Lieutenant General commanding Military Division of the Missouri.

WINFD S. HANCOCK,

*Major General Commanding.*

Official copy:

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,

*Assistant Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF DAKOTA,  
OFFICE ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL,  
St. Paul, Minnesota, November 23, 1869.

GENERAL: I have the honor to transmit to you, by direction of Major General Hancock, some correspondence with the General-in-Chief, the Lieutenant General, and the major general commanding the department, in reference to matters in Montana: (the Lieutenant General's letter to the Adjutant General, dated October 21; the reply of the General-in-Chief, dated November 4; and the Lieutenant General's instructions to the commander of the department, dated November 15.) A communication of October 12, from the Secretary of the Interior, was sent to you a day or so since. (These papers were received here November 18.)

The major general commanding the department has received a copy of your correspondence with the citizens of Montana, of October 6, a copy of which a delegation brought to him recently, in which you proposed similar action to that suggested by higher authority as soon as you should get your recruits and ascertain the locality of the Indians.

It appears by the papers first referred to that the General of the Army approves the proposition made to him by Lieutenant General Sheridan, of October 21, to find out exactly where the Piegan tribes of Indians are going to spend the winter; and after that information is obtained, about the time of a good heavy snow to send out a command and endeavor to strike them a blow. General Sheridan suggests about the 15th of January.

Major Baker, commanding the cavalry, would certainly be the appropriate person to command the expedition, and General Sheridan says he is competent. You had better send for him, and have a consultation as to means and other matters of preparation, so that nothing need be left unprepared or unsupplied which timely attention would enable you to provide. You might strengthen his command by some mounted infantry; and even an infantry command, with a reserve train, following the trail to a certain point, or striking it at that point, might be applied.

The major general commanding has already given you all the instructions or suggestions he deems necessary, and instructs me to inform you that he has only to say, further, that you will be governed by them and what is herein written and furnished you in reference to the object in question as being the views of the General and Lieutenant General of the army.

Employ the best guides; and generally what expense may be necessary to complete the outfit of such a command, should you get the information desired, do not hesitate to apply through your senior quartermaster, whom you might temporarily call to you, or through other officers of the various staff departments of supply within the limits of your command.

The authority herein given to punish Piegans, you will perceive, is also extended so as to permit you to chastise any of the Blackfeet Indians who may also have been engaged in the late depredations in Montana.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

O. D. GREENE,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

Brevet Brigadier General P. R. DE TROBRIAND,  
*Commanding District of Montana, Fort Shaw, Montana Territory.*

Official copy. Respectfully forwarded to headquarters Military Division of the Missouri, for the information of the Lieutenant General commanding.

WINF'D S. HANCOCK,  
*Major General Commanding.*

Official copy:

GEORGE L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

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HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, M. T., September 9, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to report that I returned yesterday, after an absence of fourteen days, to visit and inspect Fort Ellis, traveling ten days, and staying two days at Ellis and two at Helena, (one each way.)

This journey was hastened by circumstances of which the major general commanding was kept informed by my previous communications either by mail or telegraph.

During my journey to and from Fort Ellis I saw many different people, had long talks with most of them, and neglected no opportunity of gathering full and reliable information about the *real* facts which gave rise to the excitement in regard to Indian hostilities; what part was to be attributed to exaggerated reports, and what part to interested speculations. What conclusions I came to is the principal object of this report.

The facts are those that I reported previously and no more, that is: The attack on two white men, who died of their wounds, at Benton; the execution of two bad Indians, and the murder of two other innocent ones at the same place; the attack on one of the government trains at Eagle Creek, between Cooke and Benton; the murder of Mr. Clarke, and attempted murder of his son by a party of Piegans, led by Peter, an Indian brother-in-law of Mr. Clarke, the sons of Mountain Chief, Bear Chief, and others not well known. This, as I mentioned previously, is the bloody denouement of a long-standing family quarrel. The party being in for two murders (as they believed they had killed the young Horace Clarke, who has since recovered) thought they might as well steal as many horses as they could in their way toward the Yellowstone, where they took refuge. Hence the depredations committed at different points in that direction, especially at or near Diamond City. The band must have divided into several parties, or some other Indians must have seized the opportunity of doing mischief, since, at the time, horses were also stolen at the Mission, fifteen miles from Shaw, and near Deer Lodge, about thirty miles from Helena. These are the only facts ascertained so far, for I cannot include in the Indian hostilities the highway robbery of the mail and express, twice repeated, for it was done by white brigands, and in the Territory of Utah.

The Blackfeet, the Pend d'Oreilles, the Bloods, and even part of the Piegans, remain still perfectly quiet, protesting that they have nothing to do with these attacks on the persons or properties of white men; that they want no war, but peace, and that they are ready to come and stay on whatever reservation may be assigned to them. These assurances come to me through the agencies, and are so far corroborated by the peaceful attitude of the tribes above named. The responsibility of the recent hostilities and depredations seems therefore to rest exclusively on a band of Piegans and some roaming vagabonds of different tribes, acting on their own hook, and independently of their own people, as is often the case in the Indian country.

This is not altogether very formidable, but was enough to spread terror between Benton and Helena and scare the greater part of the Territory, as shown by the rush upon me from all sides for military protection. Could I then have disposed of only fifty mounted men by sending them promptly, part toward Benton and part toward Helena, fears would have been allayed, some depredations prevented, and some chastisement possibly inflicted. But the information that I was utterly powerless, without soldiers left for patrols, escorts, or guards, made the people more uneasy, the Indians more impudent, and several farmers send their families to Helena for safety.

This caused some commotion and a good deal of talk at Helena. Of course there was a cry for more troops and a corresponding blame upon the government for leaving the frontier so unprotected. For it is a re-



markable fact that whenever there is no apparent danger and no cause for apprehension, people will think that there is *always too much* of military, while if a handful of red-skins appear upon the bluffs, shaking their buffalo robes, it turns out suddenly that there is *never enough* of it, according to the same people. In this case I strongly suspect that there was some interested scheme on the part of some parties to magnify the danger, exaggerate the reports, and through the general excitement to bring the governor, then just arrived, to issue a proclamation to raise a regiment of mounted volunteers. This, if successful, would have procured some fat jobs to somebody or other at the expense of the government. But when I broke the subject to Governor Ashley, I found at once that he had seen through the game, and that no proclamation would be issued, at least, without real necessity.

There was also another proposition discussed freely, not only at Helena, but along the road to Benton and the Gallatin Valley. This was simply an authorization asked by certain men to organize in companies and chase and fight the Indians wherever they might find them. They asked for no pay, no arms, no equipments, no horses, but only for whatever captures they could make from the enemy. This was, I think, still more dangerous to the white farmers than to the red Indians, and no doubt that such bands let loose through the Territory would soon make the matters worse than anything else, therefore it could not be entertained.

I don't believe much in the genuineness of the fear expressed by the people along the road from Helena to Fort Ellis, through the Missouri, the Crow Creek, and the Gallatin Valley. Everywhere I saw them attending to their usual business, traveling with their wives or children, driving isolated wagons with twelve or fourteen oxen, without arms, and without any apparent concern about the Indians. Horses were grazing as usual at rather great distances from the ranches, and I found the wife of a farmer traveling alone, on foot, with her carpet bag, from Morse's Store to Forster's bridge. Still, all considered, I am under the impression that, if any serious danger was to be apprehended, it would come more properly in that direction, from the Yellowstone River, where hostile Sioux are roaming, more than anywhere else.

I would not deem it prudent, therefore, to take away again, for the present, a force of cavalry like the one just returned from the expedition commanded by Captain Clift. Better to leave those three companies to recuperate from their campaign of eight weeks, and be ready for any emergency, under command of Lieutenant Colonel Brackett, who would strike at once any Indian force breaking in on that side. At the same time, as the major general commanding desires that the exploration of a new road between Helena and Benton, on the right bank of the Missouri, be not delayed without necessity, this new expedition may be accomplished now by company L of the Second Cavalry, the one which did not take part in the expedition of Captain Clift. It is commanded by Captain and Brevet Major Thompson, a very able and efficient officer, assisted by First Lieutenant Hamilton and Second Lieutenant Swiggert; this last one is a graduate from West Point, and therefore fully competent to be of the best service. The force is quite sufficient, amounting to fifty horses. Lieutenant Colonel Brackett, with whom I talked the matter over, freely expressed his opinion that this seemed to him the best combination, and (to use his own words) that the instructions of General Hancock would be carried on and the end of the expedition attained at least as well as if he (Colonel Brackett) was himself in com-

mand of the detachment. Still I would not take a hasty decision, not being inclined to assume more responsibility than strictly necessary, and it is only after matured consideration that I have come to the conclusion that my duty was to issue the order after my return to these headquarters. In that way I have a double result in view: To achieve the exploration ordered by General Hancock, and by the presence of a cavalry force on the right bank of the Missouri to protect the parallel line of communication between Benton and Helena on the other side of the river.

The recruits *en route* for this command proceed very slowly from Fort Bridger. The road is longer and much more difficult from there than it would have been from Corinne; but I suppose that preference was given to it as nowhere else nearer than Fort Bridger transportation could be furnished for the detachment. Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Rankin was ordered to bring all the recruits to Fort Ellis, where the men would be assigned by me to the different companies; but as he forwarded by mail the descriptive rolls, I could make the assignment from here, and when I was at Fort Ellis I sent a sergeant and two men of the Second Cavalry to meet the party at Moyer's Station, where the road branches, one side toward Virginia City and Fort Ellis, the other toward Helena and Fort Shaw, with orders to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Rankin to proceed to Fort Ellis with the recruits assigned to that post, and to send direct here those destined to Fort Shaw and Camp Cook, saving thereby to this last part of the detachment a march of about ninety miles out of the way, and the corresponding delay in their arrival at destination.

As I telegraphed from Helena, I will withdraw two companies of infantry from Fort Ellis as soon as their recruits have joined them. One of those companies will be stationed at Benton, according to instructions from the major general commanding, taking possession of the old fort when it is bought by the government. The general seems fully confident that such will be the case, and I hope so in view of the advantages of the measure; but should the purchase be indefinitely postponed or not agreed upon, I would respectfully request that instructions be sent to me as to the disposition of one of the companies drawn from Fort Ellis; that is, whether I will keep it at Fort Shaw (making five companies for a post built for four) or will send it to Camp Cook, where there is no want of rooms or supplies.

This report being now complete, about my visit to Fort Ellis, I have only respectfully to submit the following conclusions:

1. The military force in the district is now scarcely sufficient for garrison duty, and entirely inadequate to the exigencies of the service in case Indian hostilities would assume a serious character.

2. As far as the infantry is concerned, filling up my regiment would be quite enough, especially if the building of a new fort at the mouth of the Muscle Shell River would bring back to the district the three companies now detached at Fort Buford.

3. Could Fort Buford be garrisoned like Fort Ellis by four companies of cavalry, I have but little doubt that those eight companies could well keep in order the hostile Sioux and other Indians on the Yellowstone River, and afford efficient protection to that region, the most exposed one, while mounted detachments of infantry could drive away roving bands of marauders from the lines of communication on the Muscleshell and Missouri up to the British Possessions.

4. The land travel for recruits sent to this district is extremely slow, difficult, and expensive. All recruits for the garrisons of Montana should be sent in the early spring by steamboats to Benton, which can *always*

be done during the months of April and May, and at least part of June.

Respectfully submitted.

I am, general, your obedient servant,

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Col. thirteenth Inf., Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Commanding.*

Brevet Brigadier General O. D. GREENE, U. S. A.,

*A. A. G. Department of Dakota, St. Paul, Minnesota.*

Official:

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,

*Assistant Adjutant General.*

HELENA, MONTANA, *October 1, 1869.*

DEAR SIR: At a large and influential meeting of the citizens of Helena and the Territory generally, the undersigned were appointed to take into consideration and to devise some plan by which the daily and increasing depredations of the hostile Indians might be prevented. Our citizens have been driven to this measure by the late murder of peaceable and inoffensive residents in the vicinity of Diamond and Silver Cities, added to the already too long catalogue of crime and the continued stealing of stock in nearly all counties of the Territory, and believing, as they do, that unless suppressed, and that speedily, it will culminate in a general massacre of our outlying settlements and the consequent abandonment and ruin of so much of our fair Territory.

The committee, after a full and careful examination of the premises, have concluded, as the first step in this matter, to ask you, as chief in military command, to put into the field two hundred cavalry, or as many as you have available for that purpose, and drive to their reservations and homes the squads or bands of Indians now scattered through the Territory, and that, having done this, you will station parties of troops for the time being at the principal passes through which they are wont to make their incursions.

We do this, not in a spirit of dictation or fault-finding, but feeling and believing that you are not only willing but anxious to co-operate with us in staying the ruthless band threatening our homes and firesides. The murder of a highly esteemed citizen within eight miles of the principal city of the Territory, in broad daylight, and the indignities heaped upon his lifeless corpse, added to previous outrages, have made our citizens terribly in earnest in this matter. The committee would also be much pleased to have your views on the situation of affairs, and what you now need in the way of troops and supplies to put the same in complete state of defense, and such further information as may be useful to the committee in carrying out the wishes of the people in their endeavor to save property and life.

With assurances of our highest regard and esteem, we are, with respect, yours, truly,

A. J. SIMMONS,

*Chairman.*

H. P. SMITH.

W. C. GILLETTE.

H. D. WASHBURN.

S. T. HAUSER.

M. MAGINNIS.

General P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Commanding District of Montana, Fort Shaw.*

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, October 6, 1869.*

GENTLEMEN: Your letter of the 1st instant was handed to me by Mr. Cutter yesterday and perused with all the attention which the importance of the subject requires.

Without going so far as to apprehend that the depredations and isolated murders lately committed by the Indians may "culminate in a general massacre of our outlying settlements," as your honorable committee seems to fear, I agree completely with you that some steps must be taken, as soon and as efficiently as possible, to suppress the crimes against persons and property in this Territory..

Well you may believe that I am not only willing but anxious to co-operate with you in staying the ruthless band threatening your homes and firesides. It is but my duty as military commander, and my greatest desire to extend the protection of the national government to all residents of this Territory to the utmost of my power to do so. The limits of that material power will be the only limit to my efforts to attain this end.

It would be useless now to enter into explanation about the circumstances by which the military forces in the Territory were reduced last spring far below the minimum number required by contingencies which unfortunately arose during the last two months, or about the difficulties which were in the way to replenish the garrisons of Montana during the temporary suspension of the recruiting service, and after the considerable reduction of the army by a law of Congress; we have only to consider the present situation and to deal with present facts; and the fact is, since I assumed command of this district, in June last, my infantry force, as you well know, has been scarcely sufficient to garrison the posts and absolutely inadequate for other duties, such as escorts, guards, patrols, &c. As to the cavalry sent to Fort Ellis from the Department of the Platte, a detachment which did not muster the effective strength of two full companies, the most of it was on an expedition along the Musselshell River during the months of July and August, and the balance is now in the field between Helena and Benton, on the right bank of the Missouri. A detachment of recruits arrived a few days ago at Fort Ellis, part of which is on its way now to Fort Shaw. This will enable me soon to relinquish, in a certain measure, the passive attitude I was forced to preserve until now, very much against my temper and my feelings. But it has always been a rule with me, gentlemen, never to promise more than I can fulfill. I must therefore candidly inform your honorable committee that the plan of operations suggested in their communication is utterly impracticable with the present resources at my disposal.

This leads me to answer that part of your letter where you express a desire to have my views upon the situation of affairs in the Territory, and what I now need in the way of troops and supplies to put the same in a complete state of defense, &c. I will give you my opinion very frankly, as well as I can from what I have seen and heard, and from an experience of some years in the Indian country.

Let us see the facts as they are, and without exaggeration:

The first fact, which I think must be admitted by all, is that there is actually *no Indian war* in the Territory. Depredations are committed, even murders are perpetrated, but by whom? By a handful of roaming thieves and murderous red vagabonds, belonging principally to the Piegan tribe, and doing mischief not in any concentrated force, but in small parties of few men; so much so that Mr. Kennedy, of the Prickly

Pear Cañon, was able, with the assistance of one man, to put one of those parties to flight, and to capture all their horses and equipments. Joe Cabel, a resident of the neighborhood, going *alone* after the marauders, has, without assistance of any kind, recaptured eleven horses and brought them back safely. As for the Indian tribes as such, the Pend d'Oreilles are friendly and peaceable, and the Blackfeet and the Bloods remain quiet so far on their reservations. So with the Mountain Crows, so with the Bannacks, and even so with one-half at least of the Piegans, who disclaim any complicity with the small bands of their tribe which, under the lead of the half-breed, Star, and the Indians, Peter, Bear Chief, a son of Mountain Chief, Black Bear, and Black Weasel, murdered Mr. Clarke, and are, I believe, responsible for two other murders and several depredations which took place lately.

If, therefore, nothing happens to alter the condition of things, the capture or death of these few men is the principal object to be aimed at, and would, in my opinion, suffice to restore security through the Territory. This is what I propose to do as soon as possible through a cavalry expedition; and to that effect, instructions will be sent without delay to the post commander at Fort Ellis.

It would have simplified the task if the committee had furnished me with any information respecting the whereabouts of that band of depredators, and it would be of great advantage if whatever is known of it in Helena or on the settlements be communicated at once to the nearest military post.

As for sending out cavalry without any more definite purpose than to drive generally to their reservations or homes the squads of Indians now scattered through the Territory, as suggested by the committee, it would require a far larger force than I can order for the purpose, and the uncertain result would not pay.

The station of troops at the principal passes in the mountains would be liable still more to the same objections, as the Indian marauders would avoid the guarded passes, and avail themselves of the others to come down and commit their depredations, where they would be sure not to meet any soldier. As a general principle, to keep the troops on the move is the best way to check Indian depredations, and the best chance to chastise them.

This amounts to saying that cavalry and mounted infantry are the only troops efficient in such cases, and such is my opinion. My views in that respect, and in regard to the necessity of a larger military force in the Territory, have been fully submitted to the proper authorities. I have no doubt the government will reinforce this command as soon as practicable, considering the obstacles arising from the already advanced season and the vast distance between Montana and the States. The contemplated establishment of new posts in the Territory is a strong indication in that direction. If, then, the three companies of the Thirtieth infantry now at Fort Buford are returned to me here, being replaced by a sufficient garrison of cavalry, and if my regiment be filled up to the maximum number, so as to enable me to organize good mounted detachments to co-operate with the cavalry at Fort Ellis, also reinforced to the full strength of the companies, I feel confident that I shall be able to clear, without much difficulty, the redskins away from the inhabited portions of the Territory, and restore full security to the settlements.

In the mean time, gentlemen, there is a French proverb which says that "the prettiest girl can give but what she has." So with any military commander. He cannot furnish more troops than he has under his command. Rest assured that what little I have for the present will be



put without delay to the best use, and that no efforts will be spared on my part toward restoring security to the white residents, and visiting the guilty Indians with the punishment they so richly deserve.

I shall be happy to receive whatever information the committee may deem of any importance. The opening of a telegraph office at Fort Shaw will in a short time afford a great facility for prompt communication between Helena and this post.

I remain, gentlemen, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Brevet Brigadier General U. S. A., Commanding.*

Messrs. A. J. SIMMONS, HENRY THOMPSON, H. P. A. SMITH, W. C. GILLETTE, H. D. WASHBURN, S. T. HAUSER, and M. MAGINNIS.

Official copy:

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

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HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
FORT SHAW, MONTANA TERRITORY,  
November 22, 1869.

SIR: So many false and exaggerated reports are spread throughout the States, as I see by the newspapers, respecting the Indians in Montana, that I deem it my duty to report to the major general commanding any fact, even of minor importance, which may contribute to his appreciation of the true condition of things; such is the object of the present communication.

You will recollect that a great commotion was caused in Helena about the last days of September by a murder committed near Silver City. It was taken at once for granted that this was the work of Indians, and highly colored descriptions of the barbarous mutilation of the body were reported in every part; whereupon a meeting took place, the committee wrote to me for protection, the grand jury took the matter in hand, &c. Now it turns up that said murder was, according to all probabilities and circumstantial evidence, committed by white men, and that the Indians had nothing whatever to do with it. The murdered man was known to have on his person a gold watch and the sum of four or five hundred dollars in greenbacks, all of which were stolen when the body was found. It is not true that the body was scalped. It is not true that it was cut or mutilated in any way. It is not true that the horses of the men were stolen; they were all found grazing quietly within some three or four hundred yards where he fell, and no Indian was seen anywhere near the place all that day.

These precise details are reported to me by Major Hanna, of the Pay Department, who has them direct from one of the residents of the place where the murder was committed. Any report of Indian disturbances in this district since that date up to his present time is absolutely false, and without foundation whatever.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel 13th Infantry, Brevet Brig. Gen., Commanding.*

Brevet Brigadier General O. D. GREENE,

*Assistant Adjutant General, Department of Dakota,  
St. Paul, Minnesota.*

Official copy:

O. D. GREENE,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*



HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF DAKOTA,  
*St. Paul, Minnesota, December 6, 1869.*

Official copy. Respectfully forwarded for the information of the  
 Lieutenant General commanding the Military Division of the Missouri.

W. S. HANCOCK,  
*Major General United States Army; Commanding.*

A true copy:

GEO. L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, November 26, 1869.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a communication, dated November 10, by which Brevet Major Chandler informs me that the major general commanding wishes me to make all possible endeavors to ascertain where the offending Blackfeet are wintering, and authorizes me, if necessary, to pay for the information, or to hire guides or scouts for such purpose, reporting to department headquarters what action I have taken.

The matter does not present any such difficulties as the major general commanding seems to apprehend; and, having kept my eyes open about these Indians, I am happy to be able to furnish the information required, without extra expense or delay.

#### PIEGANS.

The Piegans are divided. The main body is now on the British territory, hunting and trading. Although they have plenty of buffaloes, as they have to fight some other tribes, and as the price they get for their robes is much inferior to that paid by Americans, it is thought that they will come back early in the spring to join the other band, if nothing frightens them away. Their dispositions are doubtful. Nothing positive can be found out about their real intentions. My belief is, that they will act according to circumstances. They are uneasy respecting the murder of Mr. Clarke, and various depredations committed during the summer by part of their young men, and fear punishment. They will keep away during the winter, and if all is quiet, and the past seems forgotten, they will come back to trade their winter furs, either at the agency, or at a new trading post Mr. Riplinger is now establishing on the Marias, above a place called the Red Coulie, (La Coulie Range.)

The other band is friendly, under the lead of Heavy Runner, their chief. It is much the smaller of the two. They have their camp on the Marias, and day before yesterday, Heavy Runner, himself, with some followers, was at the agency on appointment to meet Lieutenant Pease, the agent. Through him I will try to have Peter, the murderer of Mr. Clarke, captured or killed—more probably killed, for there is a deadly feud between them. Peter had married a niece of Heavy Runner, the daughter of his brother, Bear's Head, and this last one was killed by his son-in-law, Peter, in a family row. So Heavy Runner swore that wherever he could catch Peter he would kill him.

That Peter is the worst ruffian among the Indians. His own tribe (the Piegans) shun him; he has been abandoned by his wife and companions, and is roaming alone to and fro. The last heard of him he was with

a small band of Bloods on the Marias River. He is the one I wish the most to have, dead or alive, as his punishment would be the most telling example.

The other Piegans implicated in the murders and depredations of last summer keep away in different directions.

Mountain Chief, whose son shot the young Horace Clarke, is with a small band roaming along Milk River, on or beyond the frontier line. He is supposed to contemplate coming on the Marias later in the season, if all is quiet in that direction. Black Weasel is with him. Their last camp was at a place called the "Writing," (from some writing or pictures on some rocks there,) close to the line and about one hundred miles from here.

Eagle's Rib, one of the followers of Mountain Chief, is denounced by Heavy Runner as having had a hand in the murder of Clarke. On another side it is denied that Star, the half-breed, was present at the fight on Eagle Creek, where a teamster was murdered. The attack was made by Piegans, Blackfeet, and Bloods accidentally united. Bear Chief, with a small band, is on Bow River, in the British Possessions.

#### BLOODS.

The Bloods are divided into two parties or bands. The principal one in numbers or importance is on Bow River beyond the line. They do not agree as to their future conduct. Part are for peace and will probably come back to the agency in the spring; the other part distrust the whites, and are more disposed to keep away in the British Possessions than to come back either for friendly or hostile purposes, as long as they have no guarantee that they will be friendly treated, and that the government will keep faith with them in the execution of the treaties.

The smaller band, about twenty-five lodges, is on the Marias, near the Red Coulie, about seventy-five miles from here. These are decidedly quiet and friendly. Nothing is alleged against them. Their chief, Escape Man, came the other day to the agency by appointment to meet the agent, in company with Heavy Runner and some warriors.

#### BLACKFEET.

The Blackfeet are all in Bow River, about three hundred miles from here, in the British Possessions. They have plenty of game, and will remain there all the winter. A trader of the Northwest Fur Company, named Cobetson or Coveson, sent an invitation to them to come and trade with him on this side of the line, but up to the latest news had received no answer.

In conclusion, I do not see, so far, an opportunity for striking a successful blow. The only Indians within reach are decidedly friendly, and nothing would be worse, I think, than to chastise them for offenses of which they are not guilty. I speak not only with a view to justice and humanity, but for the best interests of the Territory.

Those who are known or suspected to be hostile are scattered along or beyond the frontier line. The arrival of several hundred recruits, in three detachments, is known to them and keeps them all on the alert. At the first move they would disappear in the British territory. But let everything remain quiet during three or four months, and in the spring they will come back, supposing that we will let the bygones be bygones. Then I think will be the best chance to give them a lesson of good effect towards putting an end to the murders and depredations among the set-

tlements. This of course with all reserve for any good occasion which may present itself in the meantime to catch any offending party venturing within reach at a proper distance inside of the line. Those offending parties are either with Mountain Chief or Bear Chief, and number but a few lodges in each band.

In any case, I deem it of importance not to make any demonstration without a reasonable chance of success; for an unsuccessful attempt would only have the bad effect to alarm those we have an interest to bring peacefully to their reservations, and to encourage those who are ill-disposed and inclined to war.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel 13th Infantry, Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Com'g.*

Brevet Brigadier General O. D. GREENE, *U. S. A.,*  
*Assistant Adjutant General Department of Dakota,*  
*St. Paul, Minnesota.*

[Indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF DAKOTA,  
*St. Paul, Minnesota, December 13, 1869.*

Respectfully forwarded. This paper is not in reply to my letter of November 23, (you have a copy,) containing as inclosures letters of Generals Sherman and Sheridan, but to a previous letter, (of which you also have a copy,) urging General De Trobriand to find out where the hostile Indians were. He appears not to have received the letter of November 23 when this was written. I expect a reply to that within a few days. Until that is received it seems unnecessary to reply to this, and I have not done so.

WINF'D S. HANCOCK,  
*Major General U. S. A., Commanding.*

Official copy :

GEORGE L. HARTSUFF,  
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF MONTANA,  
*Fort Shaw, February 15, 1870.*

SIR: In compliance with the instructions contained in your communication of January 29, 1870, I have the honor to transmit herewith the original depositions of John P. Marshall and four others, copies of which were forwarded to department headquarters January 11, 1870.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
P. R. DE TROBRIAND,

*Colonel 13th Infantry, Bvt. Brig. Gen. U. S. A., Com'g.*

Brevet Brigadier General O. D. GREENE, *U. S. A.,*  
*Assistant Adjutant General, Department of Dakota,*  
*St. Paul, Minnesota.*

[Indorsements.]

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF DAKOTA,  
*St. Paul, Minnesota, March 3, 1870.*

Respectfully forwarded to headquarters Military Division of the Mis-  
H. Ex. Doc. 269—5

souri, as promised in my indorsement of the 27th of January, forwarding copies.

WINF'D S. HANCOCK,  
*Major General United States Army, Commanding.*

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, March 9, 1870.*

Respectfully forwarded, inviting attention of General-in-Chief.  
P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
*Washington, D. C., March 11, 1870.*

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War:

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*Deposition of John R. Wren.*

UNITED STATES, TERRITORY OF MONTANA, *Fort Benton :*

JOHN R. WREN, duly sworn, deposes and says:

Question 1. What is your name?—Answer. John R. Wren.

Q. 2. Have you ever lived in British possessions?—A. Yes; I lived in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountain House about three weeks. I met some half-breeds as I was going to said house, who said there were eight Blackfeet going to the Mountain House to trade with the Hudson's Bay Company, Mr. Hackland, chief trader.

Q. 3. At any time you was at the Mountain House, did you see any trading between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Blackfeet Indians?—A. I did. I saw two horses of the United States, and other horses with N. W. and W. F. & Co., and 96 brands, and others, altogether about one hundred head of horses, in possession of these Blackfeet Indians, which horses they traded to the Hudson's Bay Company; and the Indians boasted of having stolen these horses from citizens of the United States on the United States side of the line. The names of these Indians are Acre-skin, Natoos, or Sun, Big Swan, The Boy Chief, and others of the Blackfeet tribes, whose names I don't remember, but all of whom I can identify; that they steal horses and trade them to the Hudson's Bay Company, I know; and also know it is widely known in British America; and I also know that the Blackfeet Indians stole Kirkendall's mules, from an admission of one of their tribe to my wife, who asked him. Further, that the Blackfeet declare that if any cases of small-pox occur they will kill every white man they meet on the prairie, or words to that effect. Further, that the Hudson's Bay Company traded powder and ball to these Indians, which was about what they did trade.

JOHN R. WREN.

Sworn to and subscribed before me at Fort Benton, Montana Territory, this 8th day of January, 1870.

[SEAL.]

S. V. CLEVINGER,  
*United States Court Commissioner.*

[Internal revenue 5-cent stamp.]

*Deposition of Charles Thomas.*UNITED STATES, TERRITORY OF MONTANA, *Fort Benton* :

CHARLES THOMAS, being duly sworn, deposes and says :

Question 1. What is your name?—Answer. Charles Thomas.

Q. 2. State what you saw in regard to Blackfeet Indians trading with the Hudson's Bay Company in British America, if you were ever there and saw anything.—A. I saw the Blackfeet trading horses branded 96, and U. S., and W. F. & Co., which I believe were stolen by these Indians from United States citizens. I also saw a horse which I knew belonged to one Smith, of Diamond City, which these Indians had, and which, with the other horses mentioned, I saw these Indians trade to the Hudson's Bay Company, and with the knowledge of that company, Hackland, chief trader, that they were stolen horses from United States citizens.

Q. 3. Do you know of any Indian outrages and the names of the perpetrators?—A. I know of a murder having been committed on about nine or ten whites, men, women, and children, emigrants from the United States, and, as nearly as I could learn, they were killed in the nighttime. The head of the party who killed these persons is named Na-toosooms-tah, or White Buffalo, a Blood Indian chief of about twenty-five or thirty lodges. These emigrants who were murdered came to Montana with Captain Fisk's party from Minnesota in the year 1867, and settled on Sun River, broke up and then went north to the place in the British lines where the Blackfeet killed them. I saw a memoranda book in the possession of the Stone Indians, found on this spot, which gave the name of John Horse as one of the persons who was in the party killed.

CHARLES THOMAS.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of January, A. D. 1870.

[SEAL.]

S. V. CLEVENGER,

*United States Court Commissioner.*

[Internal revenue 5-cent stamp.]

*Deposition of William Teasdale, alias Spike.*UNITED STATES, TERRITORY OF MONTANA, *Fort Benton*, ss:WILLIAM TEASDALE, *alias* Spike, being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says, (he being of lawful age:)Question 1. What is your name?—Answer. William Teasdale, *alias* Spike.

Q. 2. What is your occupation?—A. Chopping wood.

Q. 3. Where do you now reside?—A. Fort Benton town, Montana Territory.

Q. 5. Have you resided in Benton during the last two years; if elsewhere, at what place?—A. I have not lived here during that time. I left this place May 12, 1868, for British America.

Q. 6. When did you reach British America?—A. September 10, 1868.

Q. 7. When did you leave British America?—A. September 16, 1869.

Q. 8. At what places were you in British America between September 18, 1868, and September 16, 1869?—A. Between Mountain House and Fort Edmonton, and over that section of country.

Q. 9. How long were you at any one time at Edmonton?—A. Not over three or four hours at one time.

Q. 10. Did you ever see any Blackfeet Indians at the places you mention while you were there?—A. No; except one old blind man of that tribe.

Q. 11. What other tribe of Indians, if, any, did you see there?—A. Crees, Assinaboines, Stones, and Kootenais.

Q. 12. Did you ever see any trading between these tribes and the Hudson's Bay Company?—A. No; but John Wren and John Newbert, of Fort Benton, as near as I know, have seen these tribes trading with said company.

Q. 13. Have you seen any trading between those tribes and any other parties beside the company mentioned, in British America?—A. No; I have heard it said that trading for horses to the Hudson's Bay Company by the Blackfeet Indians had been done to some extent.

WM. TEASDALE.

Sworn to and subscribed before me at Fort Benton, Montana Territory, this 8th day of January, 1870.

[SEAL.]

S. V. CLEVINGER,  
United States Court Commissioner.

[Internal revenue 5-cent stamp.]

*Deposition of John P. Marshall.*

UNITED STATES, TERRITORY OF MONTANA, *Fort Benton* :

JOHN P. MARSHALL, of lawful age, first being duly sworn, deposes and says:

Question 1. What is your name?—Answer. John P. Marshall.

Q. 2. What is your occupation?—A. Chopping wood.

Q. 3. Were you in British America at any time within two years?—A. Yes.

Q. 4. Did you see any trading between Blackfeet and the Hudson's Bay or any other company or individual?—A. No; nor with any other tribe.

JOHN P. MARSHALL.

Sworn to and subscribed before me at Fort Benton, Montana Territory, this 8th day of January, A. D. 1870.

[SEAL.]

S. V. CLEVINGER,  
United States Court Commissioner.

[Internal revenue 5-cent stamp.]

*Deposition of John Newbert.*

UNITED STATES, TERRITORY OF MONTANA, *Fort Benton*, ss:

JOHN NEWBERT, of lawful age, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

Question 1. What is your name?—Answer. John Newbert.

Q. 2. Your occupation?—A. A tailor.

Q. 3. Where do you reside?—A. In Fort Benton, since 1857, occasionally.

Q. 4. Have you ever lived in British America?—A. Yes. I started



from here July 21, 1868, and arrived at Fort Edmonton, British America, in September, 1868; wintered in that vicinity and remained until July, 1869, then went prospecting for gold and visited the Mountain House, one hundred and eighty miles above Fort Edmonton, and remained there about three weeks, owing to some five lodges of Blackfeet being there, and I was asked to interpret for the owner of the Mountain House, one Hackland, an agent of, or chief trader for, the Hudson's Bay Company.

Q. 5. Did any other parties of the Blackfeet or any other tribes arrive while you were there?—A. About twenty-two Piegan men arrived, and almost all the chiefs and principal men of the Blackfeet tribes came, on a trading expedition.

Q. 6. Did you see these tribes trading with the Hudson's Bay Company?—A. Yes.

Q. 7. What did they trade to the Indians?—A. Principally ammunition.

Q. 8. What did the Indians trade to the Hudson's Bay Company?—A. I saw them trading horses to the Hudson's Bay Company that had Wells, Fargo & Co.'s brand, one or two; and ninety-six horses branded "96," which I have learned and know belong to a person in Diamond City, Montana; and I also saw two horses, or about that number, also traded, branded U. S.; which horses I identified as horses I had seen in charge at one time of United States soldiers riding express and carrying mail between Fort Benton, Fort Shaw, Helena, and Camp Cooke. I also saw five horses that the Blackfeet acknowledged they had stolen from United States citizens between Sun River and Dearborn. The Indian that had the horses and traded them to the Hudson's Bay Company was named Big Crow Foot, a head chief of the Blackfeet. The one that had and traded the ninety-six horses branded "96" was called Low Horn, a Blackfeet. I also saw an Indian, a Blackfeet, who bragged that he had killed twelve white men. The name of this Indian, in their own language, is Na-tose-un-is-tah-y. The whites he bragged of having killed were emigrants from Minnesota by Captain Fisk's train of 1867, who had left that and gone north toward the British line. These persons were killed on the English side of the line. The Indians invariably stated and bragged to me that they had stolen them from United States citizens, and this chief trader was fully aware of the facts and encouraged them, telling them what kind of horses to bring. It was a notorious fact that the Indians did these things, and it was made no secret at these places in British America. I saw the Hudson's Bay Company's agent trade large quantities of powder and lead: twenty-six kegs of ninety pounds each of powder, and bullets in proportion, to these Indians. I can identify these Indians. Their names are Big Swan, a notorious scoundrel; Three Sun, The Boy Chief, Big Rain, Big Snake, Old Bull Head, and many other chiefs whose names I do not remember, but who belong to the various tribes of the Blackfeet nation.

JOHN NEWBERT.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of January, A. D. 1870.

[SEAL.]

S. V. CLEVENGER,  
*United States Court Commissioner.*

[Internal revenue 5-cent stamp.]

[Telegram.]

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
March 12, 1870.General P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Com'g Military Division of the Missouri, Chicago, Illinois:*

The reports of Colonel Baker and of Inspector General Hardie are received, and I have read them carefully, as also the letters of General Hancock and yourself transmitting them. I think Colonel Baker should have reported more exactly the number, sex, and kind of Indians killed; and in view of the severe strictures in Congress on this act as one of horrible cruelty to women and children, I wish you would require, by telegraph, Colonel Baker to report specifically on this point.

W. T. SHERMAN,  
General.HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, Illinois, March 18, 1870.*

GENERAL: The further report of Colonel Baker in reference to the punishment of the Piegan Indians has not yet been received. It seems strange that there should be such a want of knowledge of the position which army officers have to maintain in reference to Indian affairs. I have in my command at least five thousand miles of frontier settlements, my chief and only duty being to give protection to the families residing on these long lines against the outrages of Indians. The government has invited these settlers by opening the lands to them for pre-emption and improvement. The number of men, women, and children on this extended frontier is very great, and there is not a day from one year's end to the other that these families are exempt from the fearful thought of being murdered in the most fiendish manner—the men scalped, the women ravished, and the brains of the children dashed out. When I said in a previous letter that eight hundred had met that fate since 1862, I was below the figure, and should have said twelve hundred. My duties are to protect these people. I have nothing to do with Indians but in this connection. There is scarcely a day in which I do not receive the most heart-rending appeals to save settlers from the cruel fate which may come upon them, and I am forced to the alternative of choosing whether I shall regard their appeals or allow them to be butchered in order to save myself from the hue and cry of the people who know not the Indian, and whose families have not the fear, morning, noon, and night, of being ravished and scalped by them. The wife of the man at the center of wealth, civilization, and refinement is not more dear to him than is the wife of the pioneer of the frontier. I have no hesitation in making my choice. I am going to stand by the people over whom I am placed and give them what protection I can. We have not the troops to place at each man's house to defend it, and have sometimes to take the offensive to punish for crimes already committed, in order to prevent the perpetration of others.

In taking the offensive, I have to select that season when I can catch the fiends; and if a village is attacked, and women and children killed, the responsibility is not with the soldier, but with the people whose crimes necessitate the attack. During the war, did any one hesitate to attack a village or town occupied by the enemy because women or children were within its limits? Did we cease to throw shells into Vicksburg or Atlanta because women or children were there? If the

women and children were saved in these places, it was because they had cellars to go into; and should any of the women and children of the Piegans have lost their lives, I sincerely regret that they had not similar places of refuge, though I doubt if they would have availed themselves of them, for they fight with more fury than the men. The soldiers do not want to kill Indians. After long years of Indian frontier service, I am satisfied that they are the only good, practical friends the Indians have. We cannot avoid being abused by one side or the other. If we allow the defenseless people on the frontier to be scalped and ravished, we are burnt in effigy and execrated as soulless monsters, insensible to the sufferings of humanity. If the Indian is punished to give security to these people, we are the same soulless monsters from the other side. This is a bad predicament to be in; but, as I have said, I have made my choice, and I am going to stand by the people the government has placed me here to protect.

The reservation is the last ditch to the wild Indian, but to get him there he must be forced on by the troops. Those who think he can be induced to go there by other means are mistaken. When on the reservation he will have to be kept there by the presence of the troops, and thus become tangible for the good work of civilization, and he can only be protected in his rights while there by the troops keeping off the emigrants who encroach on his land. All these points are practically exhibited each year. The Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Comanches, Kiowas, and Apaches have just been forced on by the troops. During the last year, as soon as I withdrew the troops from the Sac and Fox reservation, the emigrants took possession. A flood of immigration, almost ten thousand strong, moved in solid mass and occupied the Osage reservation, because there were no troops to keep them off. All the other reservations on which the Indians may yet be placed will be lost in the same manner, unless guarded by the military.

Yours truly,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General.*

General W. T. SHERMAN,  
*Commanding United States Army, Washington, D. C.*

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HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
*Chicago, Illinois, March 18, 1870.*

SIR: The following communications are respectfully furnished for the information of General Sherman:

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,  
INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Chicago, Illinois, March 18, 1870.*

The following copy of a telegram, in reply to one to General De Trobriand, commanding district of Montana, of the 16th instant, desiring information for the files of this office, is respectfully submitted to the Lieutenant General commanding the division.

JAMES A. HARDIE,  
*Inspector General.*

FORT SHAW, MONTANA TERRITORY,  
*March 17, 1870.*

To General JAMES A. HARDIE, *Inspector General*:

Your telegram of March 16 received. The band of Piegans struck by Baker was guilty. Lots of murderers and thieves among them. They boasted of it themselves, and announced that in the early spring they would be down on the settlements, murdering and plundering. Baker never knew the state, age, sex, or condition of the

Indians killed. How could he? Quarter was given to all known in time as women and children. Peace and security restored to the Territory. All residents grateful, and will show it.

R. DE TROBRIAND,  
*Brevet Brigadier General U. S. A.*

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General Commanding.*

The ADJUTANT GENERAL U. S. ARMY,  
*Washington, D. C.*

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES,  
*Washington D.C., March 24, 1870.*

GENERAL: Your letter of March 18 is received. I have shown it to the Secretary of War, who says he has no objection to its publication, and he will send it to the press.

It is, of course, to be deplored that some of our people prefer to believe the story of the Piegan massacre, as trumped up by interested parties at Benton, more than a hundred miles off, rather than the official report of Colonel Baker, who was on the spot, and is the responsible party. I prefer to believe that the majority of the killed at Mountain Chief's camp were warriors; that the firing ceased the moment resistance was at an end; that quarter was given to all who asked for it; and that a hundred women and children were allowed to go free to join the other bands of the same tribe known to be camped near by, rather than the absurd report that there were only thirteen warriors killed, and that all the balance were women and children, more or less afflicted with small-pox.

The Indians on the reservations are exclusively under the protection of the Indian Bureau, but the bureau officers had officially notified you of their inability to restrain these very Piegans, and had called on you to punish them for their repeated and increasing robberies and murders, and you had, as early as last October, laid down the plan for a winter surprise and attack, which plan was immediately sent to the Indian Bureau, eliciting no remonstrance. So that there is no question at all of responsibility, save and except only as to whether Colonel Baker wantonly and cruelly killed women and children unresistingly, and this I never believed.

The army cannot resist the tide of emigration that is following toward these Indian lands, nor is it our province to determine the question of boundaries. When called on, we must, to the extent of our power, protect the settlers, and, on proper demand, we have to protect the Indian lands against the intrusion of the settlers. Thus we are placed between two fires, a most unpleasant dilemma, from which we cannot escape, and we must sustain the officers on the spot who fulfill their orders.

I repeat, therefore, that you must do the best you can in each instance, and trust to the sound judgment of the country after all the truth is revealed.

I am truly yours,

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*General.*

General P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Commanding Military Division of the Missouri,  
Chicago, Illinois.*

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY,  
Chicago, Illinois, March 27, 1870.

To General W. T. SHERMAN:

I have the honor to transmit the following dispatch, just received from Colonel Baker:

FORT ELLIS, M. T., March 23, 1870.

In answer to your telegram received on the 22d instant, I report that after having made every effort to get the judgment of the officers of the command, I am satisfied that the following numbers approximate as nearly to the exact truth as any estimate can possibly be made; that the number killed was one hundred and seventy-three. Of those there were one hundred and twenty able men, fifty-three women and children; that of captives, (afterward released,) there were of women and children one hundred and forty.

I believe that every effort was made by officers and men to save the non-combatants, and that such women and children as were killed were killed accidentally. The reports published in the Eastern papers, purporting to come from General Alfred Sully, are wholly and maliciously false, and if he has authorized them he knew them to be false; if he has given authority to these slanders, I can only suppose it is that attention may be drawn away from the manifest irregularities and inefficiency that mark the conduct of Indian affairs under his direction in this Territory. It seems incredible that the false assertions of two officers, Generally Sully and Lieutenant Pease, neither of whom have made any effort to inform themselves in the matter, should outweigh the reports of those who were engaged in the fight, and who feel that they have nothing to palliate or concede in their conduct. All the officers of this command ask at the hands of the authorities is a full and complete investigation of the campaign, and less than this cannot, in justice, be conceded to them.

C. L. BAKER,  
*Brevet Colonel United States Army, Major Second Cavalry.*

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Lieutenant General United States Army.*

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
Washington, March 28, 1870.

Official copy:

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Adjutant General.*

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
Washington, D. C., March 28, 1870.

This copy of the report of Colonel Baker of the killed and captured in his attack on Mountain Chief's Piegan camp is submitted to the Secretary of War, with the remark that the officers engaged in that expedition desire a thorough investigation, if you deem the good of the service requires it.

W. T. SHERMAN,  
*General.*

[Telegram.]

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, D. C., March 28, 1870.

General P. H. SHERIDAN,  
*Commanding Division Missouri, Chicago, Illinois:*

Your dispatches, embracing Colonel Baker's report, are received, and have been shown to the Secretary of War and the President, and full copies filed with the Secretary of the Interior.

H. Ex. Doc. 269—6

You may assure Colonel Baker that no amount of clamor has shaken our confidence in him and his officers, and that if any responsible parties will father the reports that have been so extensively published, we will give him the benefit of an official investigation.

An abstract will be given the press, (omitting the names of Sully and Pease.)

W. T. SHERMAN,

General.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, April 19, 1870.

Official:

E. D. TOWNSEND,

Adjutant General.

C. L. BAKER,

First Colonel United States Army, Major Second Cavalry.

P. H. SHERIDAN,

Lieutenant General United States Army.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, March 28, 1870.

E. D. TOWNSEND,

Adjutant General.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,

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H. B. Doc. 266—A